

JAN 3 1917

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# The Nation

VOL. XX., No. 11.]  
Registered as a Newspaper.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1916.

[PRICE 6D.  
Postage: U.K. 3d.; Abroad 1d.]

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[The Editor will be pleased to consider manuscripts if accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. He accepts no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

## Events of the Week.

THE invitation of the Central Powers to the Entente to enter into negotiations may not lead to an immediate peace. But at the least it makes a sharp break in the history of the war. If the Entente consents to an exchange of claims and terms, then the decision has been taken in principle in favor of a negotiated peace, though it may well prove that our terms are unobtainable to-day. If, on the other hand, the German overture is met by a refusal even to consider it or to reply to it, then the Germans will claim that, whatever was the origin of the war, they are now fighting on the defensive. All the circumstances of the offer incline us to the belief that it was sincerely made. The period of hints and intrigues is over, and the offer is addressed simultaneously and publicly to all the Members of the Coalition. At the emergency sitting of the Reichstag, hastily summoned to hear the good news, the Chancellor is said to have spoken with intense feeling, and all Berlin thronged the streets in eager excitement. Germany wants peace desperately, and this desire has the sincerity of a hungry man. The step was obviously taken in this dramatic way because the Chancellor wanted to convince the German people that he is doing his utmost to obtain a peace.

UNLUCKILY, the wording of his speech, of the

Kaiser's telegram to his Armies, and of the Circular Note itself, betrays the usual Prussian clumsiness. The fear that these overtures may be mistaken for a sign of weakness has led to the choice of boastful language. The utmost was made in the speech of Roumania's overthrow; in the West there are said to be larger reserves of men and material than ever before; Germany could have lived even without the Roumanian booty, but now her "safety is beyond question." So, too, the Note spoke of the "gigantic advantages" gained. The Note, the speech, and especially a rather better-inspired appeal addressed to the Pope, laid stress on the concern of Germany for the sufferings of humanity. All of these documents insisted on the will of the enemy to fight on, if his overtures are rejected, and all of them declared that in that case the moral responsibility would lie at the door of the Entente.

It is impossible as yet to estimate the significance of this move until the detailed proposals are known, to which the Note is a mere preface. Two versions are current in the United States. One describes the German terms as the restoration of the territorial *status quo ante bellum* in Belgium, France, and, indeed, everywhere in the West, and the restoration of the German colonies. But Poland "and Lithuania" are to be constituted an independent kingdom, Macedonia goes to Bulgaria, and Serbia is to be annexed to Austria. Another version in the "New York Staatszeitung," while confirming the restorations in the West and the independence of Poland, says that the suggestion as to the East is that the whole question of the Balkans, in view of its complexity, shall be referred to a European Conference. If the demand for the annexation of Serbia has really been made, there is no possibility of discussion while that stands. The other proposal, however, looks moderate enough to serve as a basis for debate. We may be sure that Germany has not made her last concession, and if her economic plight is as bad as we suppose, then she will advance beyond these terms. We owe it clearly to ourselves and to the neutrals to give the offer, whatever it may be, full consideration in the whole Council of the Allies, and the rejection, if it is rejected, must be reasoned and accompanied by our counter-claims.

THERE has been, and can be yet, no official Allied pronouncement. The press in this country is divided. The "Manchester Guardian," "Daily Telegraph," "Westminster Gazette," and "Daily News," are all against the demand for summary rejection, though all of them use cautious language, and in one way or another urge the need for circumspection. The "Westminster Gazette," in particular, suspects a design to embroil Russia with the Western Allies. All of them lay stress on the respect due to neutral opinion. The "Times" and the rest of the press call for summary rejection, and insist that our answer has been given in advance by Mr. Lloyd George in his proclamation of the policy of the "knock-out" blow. The "Daily Chronicle" would fight on to disarm Germany by taking her fleet (which, so far as the submarines go, she could rebuild in a few months) and her artillery. Folly of this kind will provoke in America and elsewhere the retort

that we, too, are now fighting for domination. M. Briand denounced the overture as "a manœuvre, a gross trap." But if it is a trap, it is as well that we should not fall into it. The minority which votes against him, which is probably less concerned with peace than with war administration, has now risen to 165. Russia has issued a *communiqué* which suggests rejection. The abler neutral papers generally doubt the readiness of the Entente to make peace, but the rise of the German exchange in Holland, and the fall of American securities, especially in the war-trades, prove that hopes of peace have been aroused which we must beware of disappointing by extreme language and immoderate claims.

MR. GEORGE has practically constituted his Government, which is, as we said, a predominantly Tory and Imperialist body, slightly infused with Labor, of the older official type, with a further tincture of "ginger" and Imperialist Liberalism. Its constitution is new to this country or to any other, for it sets up a War Directorate of five members (the number of the old Cabal), consisting of Mr. George himself, Mr. Law (as Chancellor of the Exchequer), Lord Curzon (as Lord President of the Council), Lord Milner, and Mr. Henderson, who are Ministers without portfolios. This is the Cabinet, though not in any modern or intelligible sense. The great Secretariats, the other administrative offices, the Lord Chancellor, the First Lord of the Admiralty (who is Sir Edward Carson), are all excluded, and it is impossible to say what their functions and representative capacity may be. India, the Dominions, the Foreign Office, and the two war services remain in the outer courts, in subordination to the queerest War Council that sits in Europe. Mr. Bonar Law is to be Leader of the House of Commons, which will, of course, refer back to the Prime Minister whenever it is dissatisfied with his presentments of policy.

THE Government is a Government of happy, or, rather, haphazard, thoughts. It contains some scattered elements of talent, a good deal of wealth (including two millionaires), some "business" experience, an "expert" or two of genuine quality, such as Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, who takes the Board of Education, a Ministry of Labor, and some experiments. The Ministry of Labor is nothing apart from the organization of functions assigned to it. Its first occupant is Mr. Hodge, a respectable but very mediocre appointment. The Board of Trade is largely disintegrated, the control of food going to Lord Devonport, of shipping to Sir Joseph Maclay, and (we presume) of Labor to Mr. Hodge, whose work also conflicts with that of the Home Office and the Local Government Board. It remains to be seen whether any plan will emerge from these "happy thoughts" of the Prime Minister. Mr. Barnes is also added to the exterior Ministry (is it to be assembled?) in the person of a Minister of Pensions. Lord Finlay at last reaches the Woolsack; Lord Derby succeeds Mr. George as Secretary for War; Mr. Walter Long is mysteriously transferred to the Colonial Office; Mr. Balfour accepts the Foreign Office, without Cabinet rank; and Sir Edward Carson goes into the outer lobby of Government, and also to the Board of Admiralty. Mr. Balfour's appointment, with that of Lord Robert Cecil, was at once attacked with the utmost licence by the Harmsworth press. The assault was followed by a fierce remonstrance from the Ministers assailed. Mr. George must decide; either he gives the press that made him its

head, in which case the Ministers impugned will go, or he checks it, and risks its support.

MR. BONAR LAW made an agreeable first appearance as Chancellor on Thursday. He made a grave and not empty reference to the German offer of peace, which shows, we hope, that the new Government will not rush into the vital mistake of ignoring the tender or brushing it aside without reasoned examination. He said that the policy of the Allies was still to be defined in Mr. Asquith's words—adequate reparation for the past and adequate security for the future. This is better than the chatter of irresponsible frivolity with which men's ears are still filled. On finance Mr. Law's tone was sufficiently grave. He revealed a huge daily expenditure of some £5,700,000 since the last Vote of Credit, again a great rise, largely due to subsidies to our Allies. Such an expenditure cannot be continued indefinitely on a gold standard, and those who talk of war for years omit to tell us how it is to be paid for, and by what financial methods. The Government must obviously have a policy based on their calculation of what the national finances will stand and for how long.

MR. ASQUITH addressed a meeting of the Parliamentary Liberal Party on Friday week, in a speech which magnanimously left out the sharpest passages in the conflict with Mr. Lloyd George, and bespoke for him the support of Liberalism in the prosecution of the war. But Mr. Asquith made it clear that he and Lord Grey had been victims of a "well-organized, carefully-engineered conspiracy," and also of a breach of confidence by the "Times," in the shape of a revelation of his private communications with Mr. Lloyd George. These grave suggestions were not elaborated, and the new Prime Minister has made no reply to them. As for the substance of his quarrel with Mr. George, Mr. Asquith made it clear that it turned on Mr. George's anxiety to exclude the Prime Minister from the Chairmanship of the War Council and Mr. Asquith's desire to occupy it and to choose the personnel. The body for which Mr. George has elected includes the Prime Minister, and is larger than that which Mr. George proposed for the Asquith Government. The meeting passed a warm vote of confidence in Mr. Asquith as "the leader of the Liberal Party," and the Liberal organization remains, of course, in his hands.

A MINISTRY OF LABOR is surely a false idea. The term suggests that labor can be made a separate department of Government, and treated as a separate interest, whereas democracy should take as its motto for Labor that which the French Revolution gave to the Third Estate. With what department of Government is Labor not concerned? What about education, or local government, or justice? Labor cannot be isolated from other aspects of industry and life. The Guild Socialist seems to us to be on much more hopeful and constructive lines in his conception of the place of Labor in the State. We are not inclined, therefore, to be particularly enthusiastic over Mr. Lloyd George's concession to the Labor Party of a Labor Ministry, over which Mr. Hodge is to preside. The war has revealed the necessity of some reorganization and expansion of Government departments, and some sort of Ministry of Industry will probably find a place in the administrative arrangements of the future. The Ministry of Labor will perhaps settle down into some reasonable relationship to this new Department. But we hope that Radicals will beware of letting that Ministry become stereotyped as a symbol of class differentiation.

THE French Cabinet has been reconstructed, but though the change is hailed here as an imitation of our own Directory, it is in fact an adoption, not of Mr. Lloyd George's formula, but of Mr. Asquith's. Six Ministers are to form the War Council, but they are not super-men, divorced from responsibility and administrative cares. On the contrary, they are the six Parliamentary Chiefs of the Departments chiefly affected—the Foreign Office (M. Briand), Finance (M. Ribot), War (General Lyautey), Marine (Admiral Lacaze), Munitions (M. Thomas), and Inventions (M. Painlevé). For the rest, the Cabinet is greatly reduced in numbers by the grouping of several offices under a single chief. The "Elder Statesmen" are eliminated (Combes, Freycinet, Bourgeois, and Méline), and two Socialists disappear (Sembat and Guesde). In Austria a mysterious change has occurred. Dr. Körber is dismissed after six weeks of office, and his place is taken by a banker and financial expert, Herr von Spitzmüller.

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It is not easy to understand the changes in the French Staff. General Joffre, who will ever be remembered for his conduct of the battle of the Marne, and not less for his impartiality and sound judgment in the selection of officers, has retired to Paris to act as military adviser to the French Government. It is a feasible position, and, presumably, Joffre has a wide strategic supervision over the whole field of the war so far as the French troops are concerned. But our attention is arrested by the choice of General Nivelle for the direction of the Western campaign. He is known chiefly for the Verdun campaign, but he only took over this task after Pétain had given it the winning tactics. What becomes of Castelnau? This officer, who fought one of the critical actions of the early part of the war at Nancy, and directed last year's Champagne offensive, seems to have disappeared. Foch, Pétain, Dubail, are still the commanders of the north, centre, and west sectors. Nivelle's rise in command has been as rapid as that of Pétain, with whom he entered the war as a colonel. He is a bold commander, possessed of considerable initiative and tactical ability. But in this he is surpassed by Pétain, and in strategic grasp Foch and Castelnau are generally reputed his superiors. The appointment has a political ring; but it may be that the true interpretation of the change is to give Joffre a younger executive assistant without disturbing the main commands.

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THE winter gains have fallen in Roumania, and our Ally is still retreating towards the line of the Sereth. On the left wing he appears to be imposing a check on the enemy, and the front he holds at the moment has a strange conformation. His line east of Bukarest seems to be stretched from north to south through Buzeu, instead of from east to west. Whether this suggests an approaching equilibrium on a line below the Sereth will soon be known. But there is evidence that the provisioning of the enemy in Roumania is not working with the reputed precision of German organization, and this, with the campaigning in wet, heavy country, must be imposing an appreciable handicap upon the invaders. The situation in the Dobrudja cannot be perfectly assured while the left flank is checked across the Danube. But the latest German report claims that all Roumania south of the Bukarest-Conavoda line has been cleared of its defenders.

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THE Sereth should interpose an effectual barrier

to further advance, given a sufficiency of guns and munitions; but it does not cover the whole of the front. The fortified positions through Focșani continue the line to the Carpathians; but if the retirement of Russia and Roumania has been conditioned by any lack of munitions that is more than temporary, it is idle to speculate whether the lines can be held. Austrian reports mention the severity of the fighting in the Carpathians, and this must have a material influence on the chances of developing the Roumanian campaign. If Russia can maintain this pressure, there is no doubt it will impose a severe strain on the enemy. The Russians are practised mountain campaigners, and the bitter conditions at this time of the year mean less to them than to any troops in the field. They are not assaulting continually without loss; but they can bear their casualties infinitely better than the enemy.

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SUGGESTIONS have recently been made that the enemy is contemplating sending reinforcements to the South for a great offensive against the Salonika force. The possibility of such a campaign would depend upon the chance of releasing troops from Roumania for the purpose; and it seems probable that some five or six divisions of Bulgars and Turks may be available later on. It is hardly to be thought they will be spared before the Roumanian campaign is rounded off, and the recent rally of the Bulgars north of Monastir may be read either as a spurt to give the Greeks an opportunity for joining the enemy, or as indicating the promise of approaching reinforcements from the north. In the latter case, the action of King Constantine's troops might be a result; but any chance of an offensive on his part has probably received its death blow from the blockade. How far this would protect the Allies from a sudden treacherous blow if they were driven to retreat is another question. In case of a powerful attack on the Salonika force, it would need considerable reinforcements to retain its present position. The other possible courses are a retirement upon Salonika, in which case we should lose prestige and leave the Italian force in Albania in a serious plight, and the more dangerous and damaging expedient of evacuation. If we are to stand with the hope of advancing one day, there must be no parsimony as to troops; but their reinforcement cannot be left to the Western Powers.

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THE only item of news from Greece which is quite trustworthy is that the Allies under French leadership have declared a complete blockade of all the coasts under the King's control. Rumor tells us alternately that the King is mobilizing for an attack on the Allied rear, and that he is dining with the Ministers of the Entente. It is difficult to believe that Greece can endure a really effective blockade for very long, for she depends on overseas supplies of food more absolutely than any other country in Europe, except our own. Food-prices are said to have risen already by a third, and the ticket system has been adopted. Blockade-running, however, by small vessels will not be easy to prevent on this long and broken coast-line. If the King should join the enemy, his problem of food-supplies will not be solved, for even if Germany had food to give him, there is no available railway. It is none the less expected that he will join the enemy, for M. Briand's reference to the "new enemy front" of to-morrow could hardly mean anything else. In Parliament Lord Robert Cecil stated that demands have been presented to Greece with a view of clearing up the unsatisfactory situation.



## Politics and Affairs.

### A NEW KIND OF GOVERNMENT.

It is necessary to say a few plain words about the strangely disposed body of which the new Government consists in order to discover its relationship to the war and the Empire. The first and less important fact is that it is in no intelligible sense a Liberal administration. That is not a title to attach to a Ministry which does not contain Mr. Asquith, Lord Grey, Lord Morley, Lord Haldane, Lord Loreburn, Lord Crewe, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Runciman, Mr. Harcourt, or indeed any Liberal Cabinet Minister of this generation save the Prime Minister. Only one of these men has been even asked to serve in Mr. George's Government; not one has consented. Much the same may be said of its disposition of offices. The inner strength of the Government lies in its war directorate. This is composed of Mr. Lloyd George, a Tory Protectionist, two high Tory Imperialists, and a Labor member. Next in the hierarchy of power come the great administrative posts. As to them, the Lord Chancellorship—the fountain of our Ministerial system—the five Secretaryships of State, the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and the control of the Navy, have been allocated to Conservatives or Unionists. A sprinkling of Liberal under-Ministers, a delegation from the "Ginger" group, and an *arriviste* or two, give no durable color or quality of Liberalism to an administration which is no longer served by the regular Liberal Whips. The process which Mr. Asquith described in terms of unequalled magnanimity at the Reform Club was essentially an eviction of the Liberal element in the Coalition. Its author has not as yet made any attempt to disguise its character, which he has duly acknowledged by selecting several hewers and drawers from the ranks of the Liberal Parliamentary Party, and establishing the real strength and authority of his combination on Tory Imperialism.

The second and more important characteristic of the new Government is that it is not a Cabinet at all. The Cabinet has a well-defined character, and a purpose which has been developed in more than two centuries and a-half of English history. It is a collection of heads of the great administrative departments, grouped under the Prime Minister, in what is virtually a Committee of Parliament, individually and collectively responsible to it. This body and its associations have now been destroyed. None of the chiefs of the departments, neither those directly associated with the conduct of the war, nor those whose work is ancillary to the belligerent offices, have seats in the Cabinet, if indeed the Cabinet exists any longer. The inner body is a kind of Cabal. Its number is that of Charles the Second's famous or infamous Council, and its character, that of a loose informal association with the Sovereign, divorced from departmental work, is practically the same. How long Parliament will tolerate so irregular and futile a separation of dignity from responsibility, and from the elaborate and detailed functions of modern government, remains to be seen. We cannot imagine a less appropriate moment for severing India and the Dominions, both of which have rendered priceless services in the war, from their historic connection with the Cabinet. It is of even more immediate consequence to discover how long the civil directors of the Foreign Office, the War Office, and the Admiralty will consent in a time of war to lose their historic status. What is their present position? Are they merely to emerge at intervals from the outer Courts of the Temple into the

Holy of Holies where the War Directorate sits? What are their powers? Will they possess the first-rate authority which Cabinet rank confers, or do they consist in the delegated authority of the official who executes and transmits the orders he receives from the supreme members of the hierarchy? Is Mr. Arthur Henderson to revise Mr. Arthur Balfour's views of foreign policy, and present them, thus mended, to the consideration of European diplomacy? Will Mr. Henderson also be assigned the special function of criticizing Sir John Jellicoe's plan of dealing with the submarine menace? Or are the Ministers outside the Cabinet to go more or less as they please? It is impossible to say. The War Directorate is the only body that will sit from day to day. For the rest of the Ministry no period or means of common assembly has been devised. Yet without such an organ of concerted opinion, Ministers are mere faggots, and possess just their individual powers of persuasion and remonstrance, and no more. Their acts can hardly be indicted as those of the Cabinet, for, properly speaking, there is no Cabinet. There can be no presentment of an ordered policy, emerging as the result of the reports and representations of the departments and the Prime Minister's decision on them. Mr. George's mistake has been avoided by M. Briand, who in reorganizing his Cabinet, and cutting down its numbers, has properly based it on the departments whose prime business is with the war. M. Briand has composed his Cabinet of the Ministries of War, Marine, Foreign Affairs, Munitions, and Finance. All but one of these officials have been shut out from the inner circle of Mr. George's Government.

But what is this War Directorate to which the Government of England has in effect been reduced? We are surprised to learn that it includes the new Prime Minister, who is suddenly enabled, in the gifted person of Mr. Lloyd George, to confront the double task of running the war and the Ministry of which he declared Mr. Asquith to be incapable. Is this dual responsibility still to rest on the same pair of shoulders? If so, which is to suffer, the war or the general management of this realm? Equally surprising is the composition of the body of the Directorate. It is no depreciation of Mr. Law or of Mr. Henderson to say that their talents, which are respectable, are those of the politician, divorced from any special or superadded genius for administrative affairs. Neither their experience nor their capacity leads one to look for any emerging quality beyond that of the shrewdness which hundreds of counting-houses and trade unions assemble round their desks and committee tables. The Prime Minister's two remaining colleagues are of a different quality. Both are experienced in Imperial affairs, and these have set a deep mark on their lives and characters. But if any Liberal is invited to say what he thinks of Lord Milner's administration of South Africa, he can only describe it in terms faintly reflecting Mr. Lloyd George's unmeasured condemnations of it. From its errors sprang the greatest of Liberal victories and an ensuing series of Liberal Governments. Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty was not a catastrophe in the sense of Lord Milner's Proconsulship. But it was a clear step backward in the development of the great political purpose to which, through all vicissitudes, the British idea of government steadily tends. Both Lord Curzon and Lord Milner are workers, and of a genuine, if hard, quality of mind and temper. But we remember no passage in their careers to justify the extreme eminence in judgment to which they have been raised.

There remains Mr. George. His buoyant temperament sails over the wreckage of the scene in which he



once promised to shine, and surveys a widely different world. Is he fitted to govern it? He cannot be acquitted of two false initial steps in government. On the one hand, he has committed the error, inseparable, it may be, from his haste to write down Mr. Asquith as incapable of conducting the war, of dividing the Premiership from the departments where the work of the nation is done, as if this could relieve him of the business of orderly superintendence which falls on the conductor of a Ministry. On the other, he has separated the Premiership from the Commons on whom his office depends, and without whose friendship and support his Government cannot stand. On this bad foundation he has built a War Directorate of civilians, which, with some element of experience, is, on the whole, ill-endowed with that quality, and contains no such super-eminent ability as entitles it to stand above and aloof from the three great War Secretariats. It is, emphatically, not the business of a lay Prime Minister to follow the war from hour to hour as Mr. George proposes to do, or to draw up strategic plans for waging it. It is the faculty of final decision on the plans of others on which the able amateur must rely for his main contribution to the war, a faculty, again, in which he has to act as a member of an informal European Cabinet. For this business Mr. George is both qualified and disqualified. His judgment is not without a spear-point of intuitive force; but it lacks the ample endowment of knowledge and high training that this country is accustomed to associate with its political leaders. In all these matters Mr. George will have an allowance made on his behalf which he denied to his late chief. Full account will be taken of the vastness of the enterprise to which the country is committed, and of the critical phase it has reached. It was, in our view, ill-described in a famous interview; but we will not take it that Mr. George then spoke his whole mind, or that the immense area of violence and suffering on which he now looks can be without appeal to the finer side of his temperament. Courage and firmness of temper we willingly impute to him; and without them a great Empire like ours might well fail. But victory in this battle goes neither to the meaner arts of politics nor to the more primitive lusts of combat. Rather will it follow a noble forethought for the distracted and imperilled life of man, and a clear view of the community of nations which must sustain that life, and should be the main foundation of the peace. In this sphere of thought and action another Mr. George than that of the Cabinet crisis may yet find a way for himself and for the country.

#### THE GERMAN OFFER OF PEACE.

THE Germans promised us for this week a "world-historical" event, and whatever its issue, the first formal offer of peace in this war is nothing less. The hints and the soundings, the forecasts and the rhetorical appeals, the movements for separate peaces, which preceded it, could all be disregarded, and were inevitably disregarded. This offer is deliberate, it is addressed to the whole Entente, and, above all, it is made in a blaze of publicity, with the world as its stage. We do not complain of this method: on the contrary, we welcome the innovation, for in the ending or the continuance of this war which has darkened with the shadow of death every home in the greater part of Europe, every man and woman in every belligerent country should have a voice. If it must go on, let it be because the masses in all the Allied lands are resolved that it shall go on. This offer will be known in the rain-soaked trenches to millions of men, to whom it will suggest a fleeting thought

of home, and known, moreover, in the devastated regions of Belgium, France, and Poland, to which it will promise the end of a daily nightmare. The statesman and the journalist, at ease in London and Paris and Petrograd, must make the mental effort that conjures up these many points of view. In the form and manner of this offer we are not greatly interested. It is graceless, and even vulgar, in tone, like everything that comes from the Prussian ruling class. The stupidest and best-educated nation in Europe has blundered, as it always blunders, in its dealings with men. Its naive reasoning is transparently clear. These people are afraid that we shall think their offer a sign of weakness, so they boast of their victories. They do not wish us to suppose that they are alarmed by the condition of their own people, so they talk of their concern for humanity. That is neither dignified nor shrewd, and its clumsiness tends to reduce the chances that the move may succeed.

In its broad outlines the whole world knows what the real situation is. The German victories in the East are undeniable, though some of them are more dramatic than solid. No one disputes the efficiency of the German war-machine, the skill of the leaders, and the valor of the men. No sane man imagines that this machine can be utterly broken without long months and probably years of further warfare. But other facts are equally well known to our enemies as to us. The great machine cannot impair our control of the seas. It cannot alter the fact that the reserves of men are with us, and that with every month and year of war the disparity in numbers must become more and more effectual. It cannot save the civilian population of the enemy countries from privations which are gradually sapping health and hope and confidence. We do not think that the Germans' will to fight will disappear, if fight they must, but we do think that with each month of the renewed struggle their readiness to expand their concessions will increase. They have offered peace because they feel that they are reaching the limits of their success. If we refuse peace it will be because we think that six months hence they will offer more, and a year hence yet again more. One central fact dominates our reckoning. It is that the German success in the West was all achieved in the first six weeks of the war. Since the Marne they have been held, and since the Somme they have been, however slowly, in retirement.

This is a hard reckoning, but war is a discipline in hardness. But we cannot exclude the other and more humane considerations. The cost of improving the German offer, by another six or another twelve months of fighting, will be heavy to us, even though it will be heavier still to them. Nor do we forget that some of the demands which might be enforced by a great prolongation of the war, while they might enhance our victory, might not conduce to the future peace of Europe. There is also the great element of chance to consider, and the Eastern field, especially in the Balkans, is, above all, incalculable. In striking a balance between these considerations, it will help us to keep neutral opinion in view. From the censored and selected press extracts it may not be easy to gauge that opinion. What impresses us is that in Holland and America the course of the exchange shows that there is some hope of peace. This consideration, with many others, makes it day-clear that a summary rejection without reasons of the German offer by the Allies is out of the question. We cannot refuse to take it into very careful consideration. We cannot decline, if the terms are (as in some points they probably will be) unacceptable, to put our own counter-claims before the enemy and before the world. If his terms

are in themselves, or seem to neutrals, worth discussing, then the onus of continuing the war, if it must be continued, will rest with us. This fact must be faced. The significance of the "world-historical event" lies in this, that it cuts the war sharply into two. So far, on the obvious facts, and in the opinion of neutrals, the Germans were the war-makers. From this day forward, if their terms should seem moderate and ours extreme, the balance of responsibility may appear to them to shift. The real reason in the view of neutrals for the continuance of a world-calamity would, in that case, no longer seem to be German militarism but this or the other demand by one or the other of the Allies. The abler American papers, even those most friendly to ourselves, have long been more than critical of some of the current demands, especially those relating to the Adriatic and Constantinople. The era of vagueness is over. The world has been floundering in rhetoric and phrases for two and a-half years. Phrases will serve none of us any longer. If the war goes on, it will be because one side or the other has put forward certain specific claims. The issue will be narrowed, and it must be a very cogent and a very necessary claim—a claim, moreover, for which ingenuity and goodwill can find no substitute—which will serve to justify the continuance of the war.

The neutral court deserves attention, but the masses on either side must also be considered. A summary rejection of this overture would be taken in Germany to have only one construction—that our resolve really is to crush. The inference would follow that the war is for Germany at length and in all sincerity a war of defence. We must be equally clear that to the masses in France, in Belgium, and in Russia, as well as in our own Empire, the decisive marginal claims will seem in cold blood to be worth the further cost in life and treasure and pain.

It would not be profitable as yet to discuss the unauthorized versions of the German terms. They seem to offer the restoration of French and Belgian territory without reserves, and that is a good beginning, which indicates that so far as this country is concerned, its vital interest of free sea communication is safe. They are said also to contain one point that is outside the limits of discussion—the annexation of Serbia to Austria. Serbia is not in the same case as Belgium, for she was not an unoffending neutral. But every consideration of honor and interest compels us to see her restored to a full and secure independence. Another version, however, reports the much more reasonable suggestion that Balkan questions, because of their great complexity, should be referred to a conference. We prefer on broad political grounds a genuine independence for Poland, and the neutralization of the Turkish Straits to any other solutions, but both must be under the surest international guarantees. There remain other urgent problems of nationality—Alsace-Lorraine, Armenia, the Italian Trentino—which cannot be ignored. Nor do any of the published versions refer to the more general issues of the war—trade, disarmament, the law of the sea, and the prevention of future war.

At this stage we shall not come in sight of such transactions. The first step on the Allied side will inevitably be the drafting of counter-claims which are likely to show a wide margin in comparison with the German offer. The ordinary rule of bargaining will hold. The Germans, we may be sure, have offered much less than they would really concede. Our claim will also be much higher than we are really obliged to enforce. The test will come when our answer is known, and Germany has to decide whether she will modify her offer and at any point come nearer to our position. Until that

moment is reached it is idle to speculate on the chances of peace. The real onus for the continuance of the war will rest with the side which maintains and stresses any demand which would be fatal to the independence and the future of any of the belligerents. If Germany, for example, has really claimed Serbia as her prey, then she has included at least one point which convicts her either of unbelievable stupidity or of mere insincerity. If this claim is maintained, it alone precludes further discussion. But even to an offer which includes such a point as this our answer must be reasoned and precise. We shall lose nothing in the world's court of honor by rejecting that claim. It will be a gain to emerge from the epoch of shadows and phrases. But let us not, among the details, lose sight of our guiding principle. This war has been waged for the ending of militarism. If Germany has made a claim which involves the destruction of an independent nation the war is not yet morally won. Her repudiation of all such claims will be the test of her sincerity in promising to adhere to a League of Nations.

#### THE BALANCE-SHEET OF THE WAR.

THE proposal of the enemy Powers to enter into peace negotiations marks an important era in the war, and we shall do well to review the situation calmly. There is no reason why we should be disturbed by the terms in which it is made, and it is equally unnecessary to be unduly elated. The Germans are not the victorious people the Chancellor suggests; but we make a great mistake if we read into the situation the confession of absolute defeat. Some of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's statements are greatly exaggerated and deeply colored with rhetoric. We are told that the Western front "is equipped with larger reserves of men and material than had formerly been the case," that "more efficient precautions have been taken against all Italian diversions," and that Western Wallachia has been captured. Hindenburg's unparalleled genius "has made possible things which were hitherto considered impossible." Dismissing these self-glorifications as the normal currency of a popular assembly, let us see how the war stands.

It is clear that on the theory of an aggressive war by the enemy he has not won; and it is equally clear that on the theory of an aggressive war by the Allies we have not won. There can be no question as to these two propositions, though there is plenty of scope for difference as to the true interpretation of the situation. Sir William Robertson said, the other day, that it was frequently held to be impossible to overtake an initial disadvantage in war, and General Joffre made the same point immediately before the war, in an address to cadets. It is this point that conditions the situation to-day. Without raising the question as to the responsibility for the war, we may say, without fear of challenge, that Germany and her partner were vastly better prepared for battle than the Allies. Therefore, the initial problem in August, 1914, was to prevent Germany securing a prompt decision. In this the Allies were successful. But the set of power has been largely conditioned by that first rapid rush into France. Germany had failed in her plan; but, admitting the unpalatable truth, she set out to secure a decision on the other front. Failing there, too, she decided to develop the defensive, seeing in it a means of economizing her force. That is the secret of the success of the Roumanian offensive, and it may hold another partial offensive on some other sector of the field of war. An allied assault has to be made against

defensive lines so marvellously elaborated that a considerable superiority in effective force produces only a relatively small success. We are not disposed to overlook the fact that the Somme offensive has inflicted huge losses on the enemy; but we have to bear in mind that what would have been productive of obvious and undeniable successes in open warfare, is here fated—until the final critical tension arrives—to look barren and to yield an immediate effect only by way of attrition, numerical, material, and moral.

So much we may put to the debit side of the balance-sheet. The credit side is fundamentally conditioned by the same principle of the difficulty in overtaking an initial disadvantage. On land comparatively unprepared, at sea the Allies were undeniably ready. Mahan made no claim for sea power that has not been more than justified. We have captured all the German colonies except a small part of one, and we hold them in a grip which cannot possibly be weakened. This is not an unconsidered trifle in the balance-sheet, and it must not be ignored. But we have won other victories. A supreme Navy puts us virtually in occupation of the enemy markets. We have shut down his factories. We hold a lien even on his munition works. His internal markets and stores are swept almost bare. His external trade exists no longer. The very perfection in the organization and magnification of his military machine makes the incidence of our sea power more critical. His lands cannot be made to give anything like their normal yield when he has taken the labor for his field armies and their munitionment. In this way he is fast proving that conscription reduces war to a logical absurdity. He requires the men in the field; he requires them for tillage; he requires them for his industrial position. If the world were pouring supplies into his ports he might make shift some way. But since the seas are policed by the Allied Navies, he is left in the dilemma: either the men go to the field armies, in which case they are lost to production, or they go to production, and his military fabric gives way.

Our blow at his military position and our potential influence on it are more serious than his at the incidence of our sea power. Serious as his submarine inroads have been on our mercantile marine, we have to remember that the whole world is suffering from a rise in prices. In face of this, his raids on our transport loom less large. And were they as great as he wishes they were, they would not suffice to feed a single hungry mouth in Germany. We have every reason to know that the blockade, assisted by the inevitable implications of conscription, is causing serious want in the enemy countries; and winter is only beginning. The German "victory" off Jutland Bank has not opened a port, and has no chance of opening a port. Our command of the sea for offensive purposes and all the larger aims of naval power is unchallenged, and well-nigh unchallengeable. It is noticeable that in his message to the navy the Kaiser drops all pretence at victorious encounters, and merely mentions that it has fought "loyally" and "staked all its strength."

If it is easy to make out the items of the balance-sheet, it is far from easy to cast it up. The most critical influence of our sea power cannot be seen by the world, whereas his military position looks imposing. We know of the want in Germany and Austria-Hungary, but we cannot give it a determined value. We hear of food riots, of a rising infantile death-rate, of barbarous deportations to secure an addition to Germany's labor power. We see imposing casualty lists; but we have reason to judge that the real casualties are very much higher. We know our own burdens and the sacrifices the war entails, and we tend to

underestimate his. But on a careful survey of the case on all sides we have ground for holding that our position is superior to that of the enemy. Our resources are still much greater than his; and in the field we have repeatedly vanquished his most famous troops. Yet we have to remember that he is not beaten. Unity of command is his, and firmness of will, and they are great assets. On our side we have to write off something of our force through the disadvantage of divided command and indecision. Yet, in spite of all his boasts, he knows that he has lost his aggressive aim; while we realize that we have not won ours. These, we are persuaded, are the material facts with which our diplomatists and his have to reckon.

#### THE TRUTH ABOUT FOOD SHORTAGE.

THE continued rise of prices, the appointment of a Food Controller, the imposition of a graded loaf, and the threat of meatless days have, no doubt, gone some way to impress the menace of food scarcity upon the mind of our people. But little has yet been done to inform that mind of the salient facts of the situation, so as to make a public opinion which shall give support to the growing stringency of the measures which may be necessary for the economy of national consumption. The dominant factors of the situation are the failure of harvests, the shortage of shipping, and the enlarged menace of the submarine campaign.

The statistical report of the International Institute of Agriculture, just published, gives a carefully-measured computation of the world supply of cereals, indicating the serious reduction of available food supplies. The available wheat harvests of the Northern Hemisphere this year show an aggregate deficiency of nearly 25 per cent., as compared with last year, and are considerably lower than the average for the preceding five years. The rye crop is the only cereal whose yield exceeds last year's, the fodder crops, barley, oats, and maize, being much below last year, though not below the average of certain years. "The real truth is that for all the cereals, whether destined for food or fodder, with the sole exception of oats, there exist deficiencies which cannot be classed as unimportant, even after taking into account stocks in hand at the beginning of the commercial year." But this report, which is based on statistics available in the early autumn, does not bring home the full gravity of the position. For it looks to the resources of the Southern Hemisphere to meet the deficiencies of the Northern. Now the recent prospects of the two great wheat areas of the South, Argentina and Australia, are much inferior to the expectation of last autumn, and though Australia has large resources available from last year's abundance, we cannot look for any large aggregate assistance from these sources. Indeed, it seems likely that the general shortage of the world's wheat harvests for 1916, so far as the countries upon which Great Britain relies for imports are concerned, will be considerably greater than 25 per cent. One computation from an authoritative source which has reached us puts the deficit as high as 40 per cent. Against this, of course, must be set the total available surplus of last year's abundance, a quantity incapable of close estimate, and dependent in large measure upon the policy adopted by foreign States in conserving their food supplies for their own use. Should the United States and Argentina, for example, having regard to the scarcity of their harvests, their rise of food prices, and the risk of depleting their stocks of seed corn, put an embargo upon grain exportation, our



situation would be proportionately worsened. Apart from these possibilities of State policy, there remains the risk of a private holding up of supplies, either on the part of speculators and wholesale dealers or of farmers.

Mr. Runciman has done much to bring home to us the difficulties due to the reduced facilities of transport, owing to the withdrawal of some 60 per cent. of the merchant shipping for military and naval work, and the losses inflicted upon British and neutral shipping by the submarines and mines. It is earnestly to be hoped that the new Government will, in their political and military policy, show themselves alive to the paramount importance of taking no new step which shall further endanger and reduce the quantity of shipping available for coping with the food necessities of our forces and the civil population. For though it may be urged that no increase of transport facilities will compensate for a shortage in the actual food supplies available for importation, it is evident that the stringency of our food situation (which our Allies share with us) demands that every care shall be taken to enable ships readily to avail themselves of opportunities of food freights from all countries, near or distant, which have food to sell. It is right that the people should be fully apprised of the supreme importance of these considerations, in case they should be tempted to sanction any further scheme for the reinforcement of our overseas military enterprises, in Salonika or elsewhere. In view of the depletion of our mercantile marine, the slow rate of replacement for lack of labor in the shipyards, the constant and growing destruction of British and neutral shipping by submarines, any further diversion of freight ships for purposes of military transport and supplies must be a new and serious risk to the safety of the realm and to our economic resources for the continuance of the war. To attempt to extenuate these risks or to conceal them from our people would be the idlest folly. The essential facts are patent to our enemies, and probably they set extravagant hopes upon the continuance of our failure to correlate the various forces which make up the fighting and resisting strength of a nation. Driven themselves by the increasing pressure of privation due to our command of the sea, they will doubtless do their utmost to strike at the weakest joint in our economic armor, the quantity of transport available for bringing in the overseas supplies of food upon which our national existence depends. Let us do nothing to play into their hands, or to permit our Government to do so.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THE German offer of peace is not yet a statement of terms, and in form it is tactlessness itself. But the "gesture" is surely not that of a victorious Power, whatever the accompanying words may be. It is a reflection of Germany's sore need, not a mere art of her diplomacy. In this light it is a deeply significant event, to which the light mind that seems at times to govern our thought hardly gives its true value. The situation is changed, vitally changed, from the mutual nescience and avoidance of each other's minds amid which the diplomatists conducted the first two years of the war. To say, as the "Times" says, that the German offer has been turned down unanimously in this country is to ignore the direct evidence

to the contrary furnished by its own *résumé* of press opinion. Naturally, the country wants to know what Germany proposes. Apart from humanity, that is a natural turn of men's minds, which in no way prejudices our case, and obviously helps it with the neutrals. There must be a reply to the Chancellor's tender, unless, indeed, the Allies are united in regarding Germany as outside the pale of civilized intercourse, and ready to be ground to powder between the millstones of our military and naval power. Military Germany would like to say that this is our mood, and to turn on their own peacemakers with the retort, "We told you so. You cannot have peace, because England seeks your ruin." And it is hard to see how any rejoinder on our part can avoid inquiring what Germany means. In that case she will probably retort by a demand to know what in turn the Entente desires and will accept. We shall then have entered the zone of conference, from which the belligerents can hardly emerge with entirely empty hands.

Thus this tortured world seems to move to some issue out of its tribulation. That issue can, of course, be delayed by our refusal even to consider the German offer. But that is only another way of saying that we can enter into no kind of negotiated peace; in other words, that we must dictate peace in Berlin, or on the road to it, or nowhere. But the price may be an interminable war, and no security at all that the ensuing peace will last, or that from its initiation Germany will not deliberately plot against it. Therefore I imagine there will be a reply to Germany, and a statement of our own cause, more reasoned and more in detail than we have hitherto yielded. Such a *démarche* is essential if we are to keep neutral opinion on our side, and if we cherish the faith we profess in the general principles of our warfare. It is certainly due to our soldiers, and to those who have suffered with and for them. The most discouraging feature of the sketches of German terms which have appeared is that they make no reference to any kind of international arrangement, either on armaments or policy. Without this we wander in the dark, and may, indeed, engage in an endless wrangle.

BUT let us at least take stock. If it be true that Germany has abandoned her Western ambitions, and is prepared to release (and even to reinstate) Belgium and Northern France, we have a substantial acknowledgment that at least she cannot conquer us. We are safe. We have still to consider France and Russia and Italy and Serbia and Roumania. But we have also to remember the prime purpose which we interwove into our thought about the geographical re-arrangements of the peace. It was a new Concert, a new organ of international government, at which Lord Grey and Mr. Asquith aimed. Does Mr. George hold to this view? If he does, he has some qualities which constitute him a singularly fit agent of such a transformation of State life in Europe. If he does not, and his Government sinks to a mere organ of Maxseism, of stay-at-home Jingoism (not of the Army, *bien entendu*), the day when it will give place to a more rational expression of the nation's will and of our Imperial necessities cannot be long delayed.

WHAT is one to say of the Government itself? Must we really write it down as a sort of sublimated Bottomley, an echo of the emptiest thought and feeling in England? I hope not. Its construction is eccentric in the extreme. It is hard to think that the War Directorate can last,

or can permanently be divorced from the departments whose normal business is to run a war, or that the Prime Minister can leave the House of Commons to his Chancellor of the Exchequer, or that Lord Milner is a model councillor, or Mr. Henderson a born strategist. But the Government has patches of ability and competence, which, if they are wisely directed, may coalesce into a body of some strength. Only there are initial difficulties. The direction and the make-up of the administration are amateurish. The Labor element contributes little in the way of ability; and hardly more in representative character. The Liberalism of experience has gone; and it is childish to suggest that the element which was deliberately cast out and flouted should return of its own accord. Deep resentment exists over the events of last week; not lightly will it die down. Even if that were possible, Lord Milner's name and past are enough to forbid a formal Liberal association with the Government. Mr. Asquith has done everything which mortal could do to smooth Mr. George's path (the Reform Club speech was only a half-told tale); and to treat his successor in a manner as far as possible removed from the way in which his successor treated him. But the fact remains that we are in the midst of a rather wild experiment in government. It may justify itself; but it upsets the Parliamentary connection; gives much power to some men who have no sort of title to it; and takes it from others who well know the vast field of action and thought from which they have been rudely expelled; looks like a random dictatorship; and seems likely to suffer early separation from incompatibilities of temper.

I AM told that the Liberal Party is quite clearly with Mr. Asquith, more especially in the North of England, and in Scotland, from which its main strength derives.

MR. COMYNS CARR was one of the great gossips and smoke-room figures of our time, and he was something more. Art in a sense claimed him—the art of the Lyceum Theatre and the old Grosvenor Gallery, of movements and tendencies which were fine in their way, but needed a good deal of upholstery to keep them going. Irving was the most central figure of the Comyns Carr group, and Carr helped to provide a good deal of the elaborate æstheticism to which Irving's selective genius gave a fine and imposing air. Carr, indeed, was all his life a kind of lion's provider. The fare was not always of the freshest, but it was substantial and well-served.

FROM a rhyming friend:—

Now will our England's foes have themes  
Galore their tongues to wag on;  
For in the saddle sits, meseems,  
A GEORGE without the DRAGON.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### THE BIGNESS OF THE REVOLUTION.

To the first generation of historians who attempted a record, the French Revolution was a sublime and gigantic event. They saw in it the working out of certain ideas which gave a meaning to its horrors, and even in its moments of madness and destruction they bowed to a terrific energy. If one had asked almost any well-read man of liberal opinions in the middle half of last century for the proof from history of the greatness of man, he

would have pointed to France and the Revolution, as surely as his great-grandfathers would have pointed to Athens and Rome. The years have gone by, but they do not bring the perspective of distance. We are not a little further from the Revolution than our fathers, but very much nearer to it. A whole generation of scholars, including such really big men as Sorel and Vandal, have reconstituted the ten years that followed 1789 with such minuteness that their pupils know this period, its biography, its diplomacy, its literature, its newspapers, and above all its economics, as very few of us know the decade in which we live and work. The result has been a certain dwarfing of a tremendous phenomenon. Its mechanism stands so clearly revealed that its ideas are forgotten and ignored. There is in this process a necessary and salutary work of correction. Contemporaries of the Revolution judged it almost wholly from its ideas. Burke and Paine set out from their opposite standpoints, as the opponent and advocate of its ideas, and filled in the facts to suit their briefs. The modern method is more objective, but it forgets in what measure the ideas were themselves the fuel of the mechanism. A final stage in this destructive reconstruction is reached when the historian actually denies that the ideas were working forces, traces the whole upheaval to economic conditions, and maintains that the ordered despotism of Napoleon was really the fulfilment of the revolution, since it upheld the abolition of feudalism and its whole monstrous system of privileges, taxes, and tithes.

That is the thesis of M. Louis Madelin's brilliant synoptic volume on "The French Revolution" (Heinemann), which has just appeared in an admirable English translation in that most readable series "The National History of France." Because the writing is so powerful, the basis of minute scholarship behind it so broad, the compression so skilful, and the synthesis so artistic, it is likely to stand for many years as a classic. It represents what has come to be the standard view of competent scholars to-day, and it is not exactly a new view. Beethoven, ardent admirer of the Revolution as he was, wrote the Heroic Symphony in Napoleon's honor, and destroyed the dedication only when Napoleon made himself Emperor. Godwin regarded him as an "auspicious and beneficent genius," who, "without violence to the principles of the French Revolution, suspended their morbid activity" while preserving "all the great points" of its doctrine. There is something to be said for this view, but Godwin and Beethoven did not mean what M. Madelin means. They were far from regarding the idealism of the Revolution as an excrescence; they simply deceived themselves in their faith in the Corsican's sincerity. The conception that the activity of societies can be reduced to the working of simple economic motives is wholly modern. Many a shrewd man of action perceived it by intuition in the past—Thomas Cromwell, for example, when he fortified the Reformation by allowing the English aristocracy to appropriate the Church lands. But as a theory of history the doctrine dates from Karl Marx.

The economic interpretation of history, vast as its legitimate range is, may become a tyrannous obsession. If one grants that in normal times the economic factors are the chief of all the shaping forces of history, the fact remains that, in periods of emotional exaltation, idealism may for a moment be sovereign. We think it is possible to guess when and how the idealism which helped to make the Revolution became an active force. It was not during the generation when "philosophy" was most creatively alive. The Encyclopædists had no conception of a revolution, certainly not of a popular democratic

revolution. They believed in reform from above, and Holbach, when he preached human perfectibility, used to say that kings were gardeners, who could cultivate men like apple-trees. Helvetius despaired of France, and frankly prophesied her hopeless decay and her decline to the rank of a second-class State. The philosophers hoped for a divine figure from the North, and believed, like Mr. Gladstone, in a Messianic Tsar—or Tsarina. It was the young generation which had grown up on a diet of philosophy that drew from it the will to act, and the exaltation, the sense of a dawning era of hope, came from the American Revolution, and was inspired by the share that young French aristocrats had in it. Before one succumbs to the doctrine that the French Revolution came about by the play of economic forces, one must face the fact that so large a proportion of those who made it were in its first stage aristocrats. Even the lawyers, whom Burke belabored so heartily, were not the class who suffered directly in their economic interests by the feudal system. Danton had refused a good post as a treasury lawyer, and most of the rest of them might have thriven as fashionable lawyers, superintendents of taxes, or (like the unspeakable Carrier) as noblemen's stewards. The dominating fact of this age was its cult of disinterested virtue, its fanatical belief in the possibility of virtue, and its amazing success, up to a point, in realizing virtue. Take as an instance the refusal of the French Court to profit in any way, even by trading privileges, from the gratitude of the United States. M. Madelin makes it clear that the Church accepted the confiscation of its lands with a fairly good grace; what it revolted against was the oppressive "Civil Constitution of the Clergy." If that is a fact, it is an amazingly significant fact, for the Church (or at least the upper clergy) was about the last quarter in which anyone in the eighteenth century dreamed of looking for disinterested virtue. The fact is that the emotions of France had been profoundly moved, not so much by the colder Encyclopædists as by Rousseau. This supreme artist had worked on the susceptibility of his age, until he brought about in the whole educated class, both bourgeois and noble, a condition of emotional exaltation such as rare preachers like Savonarola have occasionally produced. It was not the peasant who made the revolution, but the pity of sophisticated and, if you will, sentimental men for the peasant. This state of moral exaltation bordered on nervous instability, for the master deliberately inculcated the indulgence of feeling. It was before long to make a condition of general neurosis, which broke at last into a kind of collective insanity.

This reading of the Revolution will carry us some way, but it is not, at first sight, so easy to account for the popular outbreaks, the doings of the Paris Hôtel de Ville, and the Terror, by any reference to idealism and disinterested virtue. M. Madelin is nowhere so iconoclastic as in his handling of that tremendous symbolic event, the fall of the Bastille. It was for him mere mob violence, and he traces it (rather conjecturally, we think) in great part to the efforts of brigands and robbers. At all events, the Faubourg St. Antoine was fighting for its own hand, and so were most of the men behind Marat and "General" Hanriot. That is true, but every phenomenon of disorder must be considered from two sides. At almost any time, in almost any society, there are beggared and dissolute and criminal elements which are potentially capable of disorder. What happened in Paris was that the "intellectuals," who might have checked them, actually drove them to excess. It is when we come to consider the reason for this that we are again driven to "philosophy," and especially to Rousseau. If he explains the gentle,

pitiful, humanitarian side of the Revolution, he is guilty also of the principles of its worst excesses.

The intolerance of the Revolution was in every direction the direct consequence of the doctrine of the "Contrat Social," that the State can admit no partial associations, and, indeed, no association at all other than itself. Parties and churches (other than the State religion) are alike seditious. Rousseau would have suppressed the Catholic Church altogether, and from that starting point the Civil Constitution of the Clergy was really a tolerant compromise. The terror which seized not merely Robespierre (the perfect pedant of Rousseau-ism) but most of his school, when the Convention formed itself into natural parties, was something more than a dread of disunion in the face of a hostile Europe, more than a fear of conspiracies, and much more than personal jealousy. It was largely a doctrinaire application of the theory that the State is a single indivisible being, which cannot tolerate associations within itself. That notion is not dead, even to-day, in France; one finds it constantly in the writing of men like M. Clemenceau, who continue the revolutionary doctrine. If few of these leaders showed much respect or understanding for the representative principle, the explanation is not that they were insincere or naturally despots. The real explanation is that the representative principle was not Rousseau's expedient. It came from tradition, an obsolete and at best undeveloped tradition. What Rousseau believed in was the antique city democracy, where all the citizens met together in assembly to transact business in common. That is why, for all the Jacobins, the vital, essential element in the Revolution was not the legislative assembly at all. It was the Commune, the citizens meeting in their sections. That element of disorder, terror, and contradiction which ultimately destroyed the Revolution, and made the intervention of the Army inevitable, was no accidental thing, no spontaneous creation of the mob. It was the most "philosophic" element in the whole machinery. The Santerres, the Héberts, and the Hanriots would have been impotent if Robespierre and the other doctrinaires had really believed in the representative principle. In that case, at the first sign of disorder they would have protected the Convention. But they regarded the disorder as salutary and normal, and really with their theoretic minds had more respect for the Commune than for the Convention.

With Thermidor and the end of the Terror the idealistic impulse of the Revolution had worked itself out in sheer insanity. The doctrinaires, the men of virtue, the disinterested talents, and the bolder rascals had all slaughtered each other. No genius survived outside the army; of honest talent Carnot and Robert Lindet were almost the sole survivors; in all Paris there was nothing left alive but subtle rascality and timid mediocrity. We found ourselves wishing, as we read M. Madelin's book, that some nerve specialist with imagination would go over the whole record from his own standpoint. The physical collapse, first of Mirabeau and then of Danton, suggests that, beside ideas and interests, another principle of explanation must be called in to account for the fevers and the greatness, the coolings and the cowardice, of the Revolution—a physiological principle. From the end of the Terror onwards we have nothing to oppose to M. Madelin's reading of events. Ideas were played out, chiefly because the idealists had lost their heads. The survival value of prudence and selfishness had been demonstrated. The Revolution lived on primarily for two reasons: because the purchasers of confiscated land and other speculators had a vested interest in it, and because the regicides had to save their own necks. For



the rest, the plain man had got all that he really wanted, social equality and freedom from the economic burden of feudalism. But it was not the plain man who made the Revolution. The man who made it was the generous youth, whether noble or bourgeois, who had shed tears over Rousseau, "panted" (as that century used to say) for the possession of liberal and disinterested virtue, and dreamed of human perfectibility. The peasant's objection to the old régime may have been primarily economic: he disliked the taxes and the dues. The philosophers and the generous youths did not think on this prosaic level. They wanted to destroy institutions which caused men to grow up stunted, bent, and dwarfed. They saw in them the shackles which prevented mankind from running "the generous race to perfection." The phenomenon of the Revolution, as we see it, was a wild dance of titanic emotions, dynamic ideals, great constructive impulses, and naïve doctrinaire theories, in which the hobnailed economic impulses eventually joined. But the sabots would never have danced unless the philosophers had called the tune and the "intellectuals" forced the pace.

#### "BEHIND THE LINES."

BEFORE the war, England's popular idea of an army was chiefly derived from reviews such as the Pickwickians witnessed at Rochester, and which Mr. Snodgrass declared to be indeed a noble and a brilliant sight. Colors, we are told, fluttered gaily in the air, arms glistened brightly in the sun, column after column poured on to the plain, the military bands struck up all together, the horses stood upon two legs each, cantered backwards, and whisked their tails about in all directions. Or, if not derived from yeomanry and militia reviews, the popular idea was founded upon autumn manœuvres, when the chief object of all spectators was to crowd as near the firing lines as indignant officers allowed, and hear the rifles crack. All interest gaped upon the firing lines, and nothing else much mattered, though even in those blessed days a good deal might have been learnt from a survey of the carefully pre-arranged camping grounds and water supplies, the neat trenches of camp kitchens, the lumbering waggons of commissariat, the field hospitals for accidents and sunstroke, and the herds of bullocks driven up the lanes for the morrow's "shackles" of stew.

Even students of old wars kept their eyes fixed on the front lines and trampling battalions almost as steadily as the village crowd. What historian stops to tell us how Alexander fed his phalanxes, or Caesar his legions? Cromwell's Ironsides, Marlborough's mercenaries—we all know how they killed or died, but few care how they lived. Only when supply became obviously vital (as to Sir John Moore and Napoleon upon their retreats) because there was none, did we turn our thoughts from the dramatic front—the marching and countermarching, the cannonades, the firing platoons, the charge on flank or centre. Then we might begin to consider how the armies of the past moved about Europe, and to consider all those masses of detailed preparation which a commander-in-chief must set in order before he can resolve to invade here or "throw" an army there.

The present war has brought the business nearer to us, because the numbers in our armies are so vast that the welfare of some soldier touches almost every family in the country, and almost every family must pay dear or go short in order that this welfare may be maintained. Yet we naturally continue to fix our imagination upon "the trenches," or upon "the barrage," or the men who go "over the top," and few even attempt to realize

the varied and enormous amount of work involved "behind the lines" in holding those trenches, supplying the guns for that barrage, and feeding the men who climb the parapet for life or death. In Lord Northcliffe's sketches of various scenes upon the western and southern fronts ("At the War": Hodder & Stoughton)—the roseate lightning sketches of a hurrying visitor who sees what he wishes or is meant to see—there is one chapter which attempts to make us realize this "Army behind the Army," and for that reason we think it the most valuable in the book. It summarizes hurriedly "the war behind the war, the battles behind the battles, employing skilled workers considerably exceeding the number of the total original British Expeditionary Force." It enumerates briefly the excellent telephone system, essential for the general, whether he wishes to speak to London, Paris, a seaport base, or to his particular piece of front; essential also for the battery-commander, who under the telephone ranges his guns and fires his rounds. It enumerates the triumphant work of our Intelligence Department by aid of Flying Corps and motor dispatch riders; the perpetual toil of motor transport and motor ambulance along heavy and crowded roads; the work of the Salvage Corps, which sorts out the hideous *débris* of the battlefields, and returns it to a base to be repaired or be sold at £50 a ton; the machine shops for refitting broken-down engines and motors; the railways and lorries; the vast bakeries and storehouses; the endless supply of the million shells, the tens of million cartridges; the merciful labor of the R.A.M.C.; the offices where the record of each separate soldier is registered; the offices where the possessions of the dead are collected and forwarded to the people at home; and the fighting schools, where newly-arrived drafts receive their final instruction in bombing, gas, craters, and other forms of sudden death.

Lord Northcliffe is aware that such items as these do not nearly cover the variety of detailed work and separate departments which modern war demands behind the lines. In a later chapter he returns to the subject, and attempts again to make us realize its vastness:—

"We will say that the base is the port of —, and from that base are supplied one hundred thousand men, with their horses, if they have them, their motors, bicycles, rifles, guns great and small, machine-guns, bombs, aeroplanes, observation balloons, clothes, medical stores, beef, bacon, butter, cheese, jam, pickles, pepper, salt, shells of all sizes, cartridges, forage, harness, carts, portable hospitals, ambulance-waggons, games, and a hundred and one other things which will suggest themselves to any person who has had something to do with the equipment of a single soldier since the war began."

That is a vivid jumble, in which the duties of the Quartermaster-General's departments are finely confused so as to give some idea of the chaos which would come if organization flagged. But the duties of the Adjutant-General's departments for the supply of men, preparing the casualty lists, burying the dead, maintaining discipline and military law, are not even mentioned. Nor are the various labors of the Royal Engineers behind the lines mentioned—the road-making and mending, the map-making and squaring out for the Flying Corps and gunners, the numerous uses of photography. Yet take that mere summary of a Quartermaster-General's work as it stands, and remember that a single division of about 19,000 men alone requires a trainload of about 105 tons of mere supply every day (including fodder for the horses, but not including ammunition), and then one may easily understand how it is that in the British Army the all-round cost of a soldier is between five and six pounds a week. That helps us to understand our £5,000,000 a day, our income-tax, our food prices, and all manner of

common miseries that will increase so long as war continues and about half our working population consume or destroy instead of producing.

"This is a war of machinery as well as of bravery," says Lord Northcliffe, and many writers and art-critics have dwelt upon that mechanical side. Yet, in an interesting article in last Sunday's "Observer," Mr. Edison, who certainly knows something about mechanics, says that he is astonished by the fact that there is nothing new in this war. "All in the way of cruelties and oppression which has happened in Belgium and the North of France," he remarks sardonically, "might have been done in the Dark Ages." Not only so, but he thinks there has been little progress or originality in the application of science and mechanism. Asphyxiating gases and projected flame, he says, are old devices, and neither should have caused the enemies of Germany any trouble whatever. He has been more astonished by Germany's failure to bring forth new ideas than by the failure of her opponents, for Germany has specialized more in chemistry and electricity, and even in mechanics. Then comes a very significant passage, in which Mr. Edison maintains that the reign of comparative sanity upon earth cannot begin until the people as a whole cease to be exploited by capitalists and politicians. Religion, he says, has played a great part in the exploitation of the past, and we must be careful that business does not educate falsely for its own interest now:—

"Good education is the hope of the world, and the ambition of the best people in every country is to see to it that the masses in that country shall have an opportunity for the best of education. But education has been used as a lever of oppression and a cloak for deceit oftener than most of us realize."

Many years ago, the present writer, in despair of a general equality in education, wrote a partially ironic treatise to show that the Army was the only attempt at a poor man's university—his only chance of getting some of the advantages which the wealthy get from Oxford and Cambridge, such advantages as regular food, healthy exercise, the Freemasonry of a communal life, and a certain amount of knowledge. Nearly all the male youth of our country are plunged into that poor-man's university now, and in those departments behind the lines they are acquiring knowledge beyond the dreams of our ancient academies. It is for us to see that, in Mr. Edison's words, this education is not used as a lever of oppression and a cloak for deceit. And it is for us, when the war is over, to expose the absurdity that only under pretext of slaughter and destruction is such a university as this allowed to our working people, and that if Mr. Fisher, as Minister of Education, were to appeal for the cost of a single day's war for the establishment of such an education in peaceful and constructive arts, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would reject the appeal in language of which no Speaker could approve.

## Short Studies.

### MY VISIT TO GERMANY.

By MADELEINE DOTY.

#### III.—THE BUBBLE OF GERMAN EFFICIENCY.

Is Germany efficient? The world shouts, "Yes." But there is more than one kind of efficiency.

This is a true story told me by a friend of Frau Dunker. Frau Dunker is a working woman. She works early and late. She has no time for frivolity. Shopping is a luxury. But Frau Dunker's stockings had given out.

They had holes past mending. She must have new ones. Cheap stockings require a Government card. Silk stockings can be had without. But silk stockings are not in Frau Dunker's class. Grumblingly she gets her clothes card. She leaves the factory at noon, and spends the lunch hour in search. She finds the needed stockings, but at twice their former price. She carefully notes store and price. The adventure in stockings has only begun. The next step is a visit to the police. In the evening, weary with work, she waits her turn in line. At last her name is called. She receives a certificate of identification stating she is Frau Dunker, and lives in Martin Luther Strasse. Armed with this she next proceeds to a city magistrate. Again she waits her turn, but eventually reaches the august presence. The interview is touching. The magistrate doubts her necessity. She removes her shoes and exhibits naked toes, protruding through gaping holes. She tells the dispenser of stockings that the articles are to be had at such a store for such a price. Grudgingly the magistrate gives an order for two pairs. Thus equipped with identification certificate and magistrate's order, Frau Dunker proceeds to her purchase. Fortunately, the stockings desired are still to be had. Had they been sold, and a different kind purchased, the red tape must all be unravelled again.

Frau Dunker goes home that night muttering: "Curses on the military. Next time I won't buy stockings. I'll let my feet get sore. Then the Government must care for me."

Is this efficient? Is there not such a thing as over-organization? Suppose the police, the magistrates, card indexers, and idle rich were set to making stockings. Might there not be enough to go round? Germany abounds in red tape.

I struggled desperately to reach Germany's poor. I wanted to expend the money given me by the Christian Work Fund properly. But official Germany denies its poor and hides them. The officials of the Relief Organizations were very kindly and very appreciative, but they insisted on showing me card catalogues and pamphlets, and on discussing organization instead of producing hungry babies. I flatly refused to spend money on cataloguing. One day I was told I should see suffering babies and Germany's care. In different districts Berlin has centres for babies. Here children are brought to be tested. I reached one of these offices at 2.30 one afternoon. Two is the opening hour. There were no babies. I found a doctor, two white-clad nurses, three beautifully-equipped rooms, and row upon row of index cards. Just as I was departing, one quite normal-looking baby arrived. The doctor reported the baby's condition as satisfactory.

My lack of success discouraged me. I appealed to a woman social-worker. "Very well," she said; "I'll show you what is happening." She took me to the North of Berlin. There little children swarmed, dirty, ragged, barefooted, and pale. This is a new state of affairs for Germany. Heretofore there has always been at least potatoes and clothes. No one has gone hungry. Paternalism flourishes only when the family is fed. When father fails to furnish food the children rebel. The spirit of rebellion is abroad in Germany. We visited several tenements. The following is a typical family. A mother, nine children, and grandmother, two rooms and a kitchen. Father in the war, income 144 marks (\$36) a month; rent, \$7 a month. This mother could not afford to eat at a feeding kitchen. One meal at ten cents a head meant \$1.20. The baby was six months old. It had what is termed "the English sickness." It was weak from lack of nourishment. It could not raise its arms. Since September 1st only children under six are allowed milk. The allowance is a pint a day. Not enough to nourish a baby. This family was living on tea and potatoes.

We visited many families. I could not but admire my companion. She was very proud, but tears ran down her cheeks. She belonged to the official class. She adored Germany, and held every German act right, yet her heart bled for her people. Vainly she was trying to stem the tide. She dashed her tears aside to say: "Do you wonder German women are bitter? But England



shall not bring us to our knees, rather we will give our last baby first."

At every home I insisted on laying in supplies. But there was little to buy. Nothing with substance—no meal. We had to be content with pudding powder (Heaven knows what that is), tea "Ersatz," and some canned goods. My companion had succeeded in getting some packages of meal from the Government. When she produced one of these the family went mad with joy. Quaker oats are more precious to mothers than diamonds. The thing that is needed is food—not money. But I gave my companion some money from the Christian Work Fund. "Buy things that are going to the rich and give them to the poor," I said.

I knew now what was most needed. It was milk for babies. I dislike quoting figures, but a trustworthy and well-informed Social Democrat told me that in the big hospitals for babies the increase in mortality was 50 per cent. In the German papers were printed the following statistics in regard to the Children's Hospital in Berlin. In the first three days, 1912-1913—ninety-three died. In the first three days 1914 to 1915, 160 died. I consulted Dr. Kimmule, the head of the German Red Cross in Berlin, about securing milk. He thought the best investment goats. More money had come from the Christian Work Fund, and I turned over 4,000 marks (roughly, because of depreciation, about \$800), with which to buy goats for the north of Berlin. The wealthy agrarian who sold the goats asked 150 marks (\$37.50) a goat. Ordinarily, the price is 30 marks, or \$5.50 per goat. Was this German agrarian patriotic or efficient? He made money out of the necessity of the German babies. Why did the Government permit it? Was it efficient? Does Germany handle its food supply efficiently?

The following items are to be had only with Government cards: Bread, meat, potatoes, butter, sugar, cheese, milk, eggs, meal, flour, soap, and cheap clothes. Each person has to trade at the store assigned. Working people have to buy during noon and evening hours. This results in long lines in front of every shop at twelve and at six.

One Saturday evening I went to a big market in the poor quarter of Berlin. This market covers an entire block. In it are sold meat, groceries, and dairy products. I arrived at six. There was little meat visible. At one booth a butcher presided over a wholly empty counter. A little old woman stood before him weeping bitterly. Between sobs she let out a torrent of words. This is what she said: "I must have some fat"—sob—"I haven't had meat or fat for three weeks." Sob, sob, sob. "My stomach has turned against marmalade"—sob—"I can't live on it any longer." Sob, and indignantly: "It's no use telling me to come earlier before the meat's gone. I can't come earlier. I have to work until six."

I pulled my companion's sleeve: "Look!" I said, "There's meat on that other counter; couldn't we buy some?" But no, of course not; the little old woman could only get meat with her meat card from her particular butcher. This time it was I who said: "Curses on the military." Conspicuously over many counters flapped the sign, "Ersatz." "Ersatz" means substitute. Sausage Ersatz was a pale edition of the real article. One's speculations run riot.

But there were few meat purchasers. The people were out for potatoes. The potato counter was as bad as a bargain day at Selfridge's. At six o'clock there was a line stretching through the entire market and far out into the street. At least two thousand people were in line. I stood and watched for three hours, and the line never decreased. As fast as some left, others arrived. There were old men and women, mothers with babies and tiny children clinging to their skirts, and young children carrying huge baskets. The crowd swayed and muttered. It stood on one foot and then on the other. Women who had worked all day looked ready to drop with fatigue. At the counter three or four women employees were dealing out potatoes and punching cards as rapidly as possible. Occasionally little commotions broke the monotony. Once a baby cried. We hurried toward the sound. In a baby carriage a tiny creature

sobbed drearily. Standing beside the carriage and clinging tight to the baby was a five-year-old, also weeping. Brother, twelve years old, had been standing in line three hours for his potatoes. Meantime, the babies had grown hungry. They had had nothing to eat since noon. Some kindly women gave them bread, which was devoured eagerly. Presently mother arrived, just released from the factory. She was tired and worn. She shook and scolded brother for being so slow. Then the little procession moved off, the babies, the little boy, all dirty, ragged, and barefooted, and the worn mother, with a bag of potatoes between them. All they had. Father was in the war.

Once I left the market and went with my friend to sit on a street bench near by. Close to us was a pale, sickly man and his wife and child.

"Have you your potatoes yet?" we inquired. "No," was the reply, "but grandmother is standing in line. It's going to be all right to-night. Last Saturday we waited three hours. Then we hadn't any. They'd given out." "What did you do?" we gasped. Quietly, without bitterness, came the answer: "We went hungry, of course."

We went back to the market. There was still the same line, but the crowd was getting restless. A rumor was afloat that the potatoes were giving out. Women began to talk in angry tones. Then an amusing incident occurred. A patient horse hitched to a delivery waggon had been standing among the people. Little children came to pat and stroke his nose. He seemed the mildest of creatures. Then came the report about the potatoes. The crowd began to mutter. An officious policeman began to shove the people back. His tones were angry, his manner far from gentle. As he passed the horse, the creature seemed to bristle. Its meekness banished, and throwing up its head, it gave the officer a vicious nip. A little cheer broke from the crowd. The horse was so human. It had so expressed the multitude. The officer was furious. He spat upon the animal, and hit him in the face. In a moment children were crowding around and again patting the horse's nose. All the creature's meekness returned. But the crowd was angry. Some women shook their fists. Then a whisper passed along the line. More potatoes had arrived. A huge waggon-full stood outside. Only this word prevented a riot. The crowd settled down; peace came again. Nothing would happen that night. It was nine o'clock. My friend and I were weary, and we left.

Is such food distribution efficient? The agrarians are asking about one and one-half cents a pound for potatoes. They wanted to raise it to three cents, but the Government set the limit at a cent and a half. Out of revenge the agrarians sent the worst potatoes to Berlin.

Germany cannot afford to have one worker starve. Why not seize agrarian land, and set officials and card indexers to raising potatoes? It would be more profitable to pay for such work than for card cataloguing? Why bother with cards? Why not establish eating kitchens, and let everybody who is hungry eat at meal times? Card cataloguing might be used to see that each one worked. But both rich and poor could be given food at Government kitchens, and share and share alike.

The wealthy people do not stand in line. Their servants do this for them. Besides, chickens and birds at high prices are to be had without cards. The egg allowance is one a week. But for the wealthy this also is a farce. I grew egg hungry, and demanded two one week, but the waiter was adamant. "Well," I grinned, "I know what I'll do; I'll buy some live chickens and keep them in my room, then I can have eggs every morning for breakfast." Actually the waiter laughed. Seriously, that chicken idea is not bad. If Mme. Hempel had taken chickens and a goat to Germany with her this summer, instead of her lap dog, she would have been very popular. This idea is not patented, and I recommend it to all travellers in Germany.

In the big cities conditions are worse than in the country. Farmers are expected to pool and sell their supplies of milk, butter, and eggs, but, naturally, they hold back enough for their children. There is no way of knowing how much milk each cow gives each day unless



the German army was retired from the field to do the milking, and report to the Government. Even German organization cannot brook this. One farmer I discovered greasing the wheels of his waggon with home-made butter. The price of butter is kept at a fixed rate. Oil was so expensive he couldn't afford it. Soap was not on the card list until late August. Fat had been under control for months, but the Government forgot soap was grease. Now one cake a month is the allowance. The ante-war soap is very expensive. I paid 50 cents for a 15 cent cake. The soap made since the war is atrocious.

I asked the Social Democrats about the food riots. They occurred, I was told, chiefly in the spring, when the potatoes gave out. In Hamburg the women ran straight on the soldiers' bayonets in the struggle for food, and several were killed. The following day, Sunday, the Government had to throw open the Hamburg provision stores, and let the people buy to restore peace. Berlin has had several riots. In some cities women have been shot. "It is quite easy to start rebellion," said a Social Democrat to me. "Several times we went to the market and urged the crowd to riot. But we stopped, for women were put in prison and the children left destitute."

But when there are no potatoes there will be riots. As long as there is food for the children, however inadequate, the women keep quiet. Their hearts are sore, but they dare not rebel. They fear the fate that may befall their husbands at the front, if they make trouble. Or, if the husband is wounded, they fear he will not be well cared for. Or they fear their children will be taken from them. But these women when spoken to look wise and say: "Wait until our men come back from the front, then you'll see."

The German Government is headed for disaster, because it has failed to distinguish between two kinds of efficiency—personal efficiency and industrial efficiency. Human beings cannot be treated like machines. It does not make them efficient. The world would do well to copy Germany's industrial efficiency. German hotels, railroads, cars, and factories are the best of their kind. But Germany's attempt to apply her system to individuals is creating havoc. Human beings are efficient when they are imaginative, original, and uncrushable. That is why France has out-shone all other belligerents. Her people can turn a shirt-waist factory into a munition factory overnight. Germany would spend three months cataloguing and drawing plans. England would be too bound by tradition and custom to make such an adjustment. She would build a new factory.

A year ago, I nursed the wounded French soldiers. They could discuss anything from feminism to American politics. The German common soldier dares talk only what he has been taught. The English "Tommy" is too stolid to talk of anything.

Under paternalism we feed, clothe, and spank our babies, and they may become good-natured, obedient, and cultured people. But if the roof blows off the house and the children are thrust out to meet bears and snakes undirected, they are helpless.

There is only one real preparedness, and that is preparation for life. That is to be had, not by drill and obedience, but by learning self-control through self-government. Only people who do their own thinking and steering have value. When children have become efficient, put them together to learn united action. The force of thinking people, acting as one, is gigantic. Secretary Daniels talks of introducing self-government into the American Navy. The treatment, good for convicts, is even more valuable for the ordinary citizen. If the American Navy becomes really self-governing, its efficiency will make the English Navy look sick.

The wonder of the world is not Germany or England, but France. Germany in years of preparation built up an army, and laid in food and munitions for two years. But the two years is up, and the nation begins to crack and crumble. France, on the other hand, in spite of the strain, is still active and vividly alive. Her people, undrilled in obedience, but strong in personal efficiency, have stood together as one man. Slowly the German people are disintegrating. In March or April, if not

before, unless securing the food supply in Roumania puts off the evil day, the potatoes will give out, and there will be riots. When this occurs, if Lloyd George is still making speeches about crushing Germany, the German militarists by these speeches may drive the people together in a campaign of desperation and horror. Belgians will be seized and abused, submarine terrors multiplied. But if a hand of sympathy is extended to the German worker, he will riot, not against mankind, but against his own Government. Militarism will be overthrown. Now is the critical moment. Ought we not to aid the awakened, struggling German in his fight against Imperialism?

## Communications.

### THE SOLDIERS' LEAVE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The announcement that soldiers at home were to lose their Christmas leave, coupled with the intimation that it was hoped that civilians would keep down their travelling to reasonable limits during the Christmas holidays, excited a good deal of indignation among soldiers and their relations. Something of the sort happened in certain of the commands last Easter. The effect of such discrimination in favor of civilians can only be to embitter the feelings of soldiers; for it is one thing to lose your leave because military considerations make it desirable to keep soldiers at their depôts, and another thing to lose your leave because there is not room in the trains for civilians and soldiers, and soldiers can be given orders more easily than civilians. If there are reasons for restricting railway travelling—and it is easy to imagine what they are—the first thing to do is obviously to take off first-class carriages. It is unjust that some persons should have more than their share of the railway accommodation when that accommodation is insufficient for the travelling public. If some have to forego their Christmas travelling, it is surely unreasonable to impose that disappointment first on the soldier, who is suffering, or about to suffer, a great deal for his country, rather than on the civilian, who at least is spared the discomforts of camp and trench.

These arrangements have been revised, but the incident raises the whole question of the soldier's claim for consideration and humane treatment, a question that is assuming a real importance. At the beginning of the war, hospitality and friendship to soldiers was all the rage. In this respect there has been a great change. The other day some A.S.C. men were packing hay near the house of a friend of mine, and he naturally invited them in. They told him that they had been working on farms in different parts of the country for some months, and that they had not been asked inside a house once. Some farmers had gone so far as to say they might sit in the barn to eat their dinner on wet days. Nobody can imagine this happening in October, 1914. In those days nothing was too good for the soldier. It is only those who have served in the Army who know what a difference hospitality and friendship make in a soldier's life. I speak with some experience, because I served in a battery which was quartered for some months in a small town in Scotland where everybody wanted to entertain us, and afterwards in a village in England where, for some reason or other, the soldier was regarded as a mere nuisance. It was with some difficulty that I restrained myself from reminding the rector, in his large and comfortable house, and the half-dozen stockbrokers who made up the local gentry, that if they were still living in luxury it was because a great many of their countrymen were undergoing the discomforts of military training with a view to risking their lives on the battlefield. The rector preached to the men on Sundays, and the chief stockbroker came to the battery office to protest because the guns were put outside his front gates, and he feared they would attract Zeppelins. That was all that the rich people did for the hundred and

fifty soldiers who had left their homes and been billeted in this village. In the first place we had an excellent canteen, with concerts and whist drives, and in the second there was virtually nowhere for men to sit and amuse themselves outside the public-house, where they had to pay for the privilege. I am glad to think the people in this village were not typical, but I fancy that it would be generally agreed that soldiers receive less hospitality now than two years ago. It is partly that we are poorer, partly that we are war-weary, partly, too, let me add, that conscription has affected the temper of society towards the soldier.

Yet it is true that the soldier needs friendship and sympathy more now than in the earlier days of the war. The new armies, a year ago, and two years ago, had to put up with a great many disadvantages. Accommodation and equipment were insufficient, and it is depressing to drill in an emergency blue uniform, with dummy rifles, or to be trained with an obsolete French gun and twenty horses to a battery. Most people have heard something, too, of the scandals of the early camps with their stories of privation and disease. But the spirit of those days was buoyant and inspiring, for it was the spirit of comradeship in a great cause. Officers and men were learning their soldiering together, and the atmosphere was rather that of a football club than that of the rigorous and soul-destroying barrack-ground. Here you had a battalion from Leeds, there from Manchester, somewhere else from Tyneside; some battalions were made up of London bank clerks, others of Scottish engineers, others of South Wales miners. Each battalion had a character; it represented the enthusiasm of a district. The men knew each other, and the sense of spontaneous service kept in check the repulsive features of a military system. For what is repulsive to Englishmen in a military system is the sense of the machine, the feeling that your life is directed by some inhuman, irresponsible destiny. The new Army, with its corporate spirit, its local traditions, its stimulating sense of freedom and conscious duty, was greater than the machine. There was plenty of hardship and tedium in its life, but it remained a kind of brotherhood, with the prospect of facing battle and death as a brotherhood.

To-day the machine is stronger than the sense of comradeship. The new recruit is drilled in a vast camp, where the old local ties are lost in the scale of the new organization. It is his destiny to go out, when the time comes, in a draft. The old units are largely names. Anybody who has lived in one of these camps knows that there hangs about it the atmosphere of a prison. To say this is not to blame the authorities, for they have to consider what is the most rapid and effective way of training the recruit and filling up the old units. But every possible means should be adopted for counteracting this atmosphere, and a great deal more might be done in many of the camps to create the spirit of happiness and comradeship which, as Mr. Graham Wallas has pointed out, is so essential a part of successful organization. The old military sentiment thinks of the soldier as a man whose natural weakness for liberty has to be corrected in the rigorous atmosphere of the drill ground. For this purpose any discipline serves, however stupid its forms and routine. But for the new Army what is wanted is some influence that will enable a man to keep his self-respect, find military life congenial, or at least tolerable, to his general sense of freedom, and that is a human and not a prison influence.

This, of course, is not the only or the chief element in the change. I used to wonder when I watched the sergeant taking recruits at gun drill how far the atmosphere of the scene would be affected by conscription. The moral depreciation of military life is part of the price we have paid for compulsory service. A sergeant-major from the old Army finds himself in front of a batch of men who are learning their drill from him, not as voluntary soldiers but as forced soldiers. There are probably many sergeant-majors to whom it makes no difference, but it makes a tremendous difference to the man who is drilled.

All this side of military life is apt to be obscured in the general haste of the Army to get recruits and to swell its numbers. But both for the present and for the future it possesses a great importance.—Yours, &c.,

R.F.A.

December 13th, 1916.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE TASK OF THE OPPOSITION.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Liberals watch the new Tory-Liberal Administration with terrible anxiety. Of the two most important elements in its composition, the Labor representatives (in so far as they are representative) will no doubt exercise a restraining influence on any tendencies towards a Jingo policy. They have obviously consented to join the Government partly with this object, and partly because they realize that any effective prosecution of the war without labor support is impossible. They can have no other aim than this, for it is preposterous to imagine that they could have been hoodwinked by any promises of Socialistic legislation. They know that Guild Socialism, not State Socialism, is the goal of the workers; and that the substitution of the Capitalist State for the private capitalist, followed, perhaps, by industrial conscription (for what are promises worth to-day?) may very well result in fixing the fetters still more firmly on the wage-earners, unless such a policy is pursued merely as a method of transition.

But what of the other elements? The strongest personalities in the new Administration were in the past exponents of the most reactionary type of commercial Imperialism; Mr. Lloyd George is, on the most sympathetic reading of the situation, a doubtful quantity, and "The Times" must now be considered the official organ of the Government. Will such a body of men be on the right side in the present struggle? Daily, beneath the surface of the war between the Central Powers and the Allies, another conflict is developing—a conflict between the worshippers of militarism and power and the exponents of a new ideal based on righteousness and Christianity. The "Echo de Paris" argues for "a better and different Balance of Power"; and its ally is the "Kreuz Zeitung," with its belief in "the peace policy which looks to the sharpness of our sword as the best protection for peace." The "Ligue des Droits des Hommes" desires a new international harmony; and it looks for support across the Rhine to the "Central Committee of International Right." The same clear division of opinion is apparent in Italy and Russia; though the politics of the latter country result in a peculiar disposition of the forces—on the one side are the extreme militarists, with their obvious tendency towards a separate peace with Germany and a new Holy Alliance, and on the other side are the pacific elements, who are determined to carry on the war against militarism to a finish.

Now it was the belief that Germany was the most powerful exponent of the principle of aggression, and that she could only be converted if we met and defeated her on her own ground, that threw Liberal opinion at the outset into whole-hearted approval of the war. We knew that we had our Junker element; we knew that Germany had her Liberal element; but the predominance in Germany of the militarist cliques under an Absolute Monarchy, and her cult of power as a religion, did give to the struggle as a whole the character of a war between Freedom and Oppression. And it was because we felt confident that Mr. Asquith and Viscount Grey looked on the matter in this light, as they made apparent in their speeches, that we gave them our constant support, in spite of much weakness and many undoubted blunders. For the same reason we cannot but feel the gravest concern at their fall. Mr. Lloyd George may be more successful in his conduct of the war; though many will regard with suspicion any risky experiments undertaken at the promptings of a volatile temperament. But will he keep the supreme object in view? Already "The Times," in its leading article of December 8th, gives an indication of what we may expect. "They (the enemy)," it runs, "had built high hopes on Mr. Asquith's supposed readiness to dally with the notion of a European League of Peace, and upon their own ability to turn such a league to their own purposes as deftly as they did with the Hague Convention. The existence of such an idea, false and grotesque though we know it to be, illustrates the pernicious misconstructions to which the policy of 'wait and

see' was exposed." And it is significant that on the same day the "Nieuws van den Dag" described the changes in the British Government as a triumph of Jingoism.

If the fall of Mr. Asquith means the saving of a few mistakes in the conduct of affairs (a very doubtful assumption), but at the same time a change in the aim for which we are fighting, an illusory advantage will have been purchased at a terrible cost. The first indication that mere conquest has replaced liberation as our official policy will alienate thousands of Liberals who, like myself, see a change in the attitude of Germany, but think that the war must go on till that change is far more widespread and our original object thoroughly and completely achieved. It will strengthen enormously the ranks of the very small body of men who take up, to my mind, the radically false position that no war is ever justifiable. Above all, a Jingo policy would be a ghastly treachery to those (and all of us must know many such) who, loathing war, have gone into battle sick at heart, and yet willingly died for the ideals without which life seemed intolerable to them. It is miserably short-sighted to imagine that the winning of the war is the one necessary thing: the one necessary thing is the future peace of the world, and the effective prosecution of the war is but a means to that end.

I do not say that Mr. Lloyd George will become a Jingo. He has shown much idealism in the past, and we should never forget that he once endured unpopularity and insult for his refusal to support what he regarded as an unjust war. But there is a terrible danger that he will be forced into an illiberal position by his supporters within and without the Government, just as in Athens Pericles was forced into a commercial policy, and, in our own time, Mr. Balfour into a support of Tariff Reform. Under these circumstances, the new Liberal Opposition has a great and honorable task before it. Mr. Asquith has been released from the burden of daily administration, and will be able to keep his mind fixed on ultimate things. As the official representative of a large body of Englishmen, he will be able to oppose any wildness of utterance that might endanger a lasting peace; he will be able to give a public denial to the idea that we have any ambitious motives, and so win the sympathy of neutrals and give valuable aid to moderate German opinion in its fight against Junkerdom; above all, he will be able to keep constantly before the mind both of the Government and of the nation this vital necessity—that the settlement shall leave no legacy of hatred and instability from which future wars may arise, but shall contain in itself the beginnings of a League of Nations, by which the peace of the world may be enforced. Such an activity does not of course in any sense imply opposition to the War Administration of the Government; but it does imply the triumph of the policy which Mr. Asquith explained in his speech at Dublin on September 25th—"the substitution for force, for the clash of competing ambition, for groupings and alliances, and a precarious equipoise, of a real European partnership based on the recognition of equal right, and established and enforced by common will."—Yours, &c.,

VICTOR GOLLANCZ.

December 10th, 1916.

### THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Some points of much interest not only to the future historian but also to the student of constitutional history emerge from the recent changes in the Government.

Mr. Lloyd George demanded a Committee of three; no sooner did he become Prime Minister than the proper number was increased to five. He demanded that the Prime Minister should not be a member of the Committee; no sooner did he become Prime Minister than he became Chairman of the War Committee. If the reason for change, as we were told in the papers, was that "the Prime Minister has sufficient cares of a more general character without devoting himself wholly, as the new Council must be devoted, if it is to be effective, to the daily task of organizing victory," then how does it come about that Mr. Lloyd George in his own person can unite the offices of Prime Minister and of Chairman of the War Committee? Either,

upon his assumption, the new War Council will be ineffective or the Prime Minister's more general duties will not be effectively performed. The alleged reasons for so great a change have no sooner served their purpose than they would appear to be cast aside; a fact that assuredly requires some explanation—indeed, some defence. Is Mr. Asquith justified?

Mr. Asquith has told us at the Reform Club that, in his opinion, "excellent as was the work done by the Committee, its efficiency might be increased, if it were possible to reduce the numbers and to multiply the frequency of its meetings." He further had replied to Mr. Lloyd George that "whatever changes were made in the constitution or functions of the Committee, the Prime Minister must be its Chairman. . . . I shall be very surprised if any Prime Minister attempts to govern this country without sitting on the War Committee." Does Mr. Lloyd George agree? If so, it is difficult to see what was the point at issue. If he does not agree, then how is the new régime to be justified?—Yours, &c.,

AN INDEPENDENT TORY.

### THE FEELING OF THIS COUNTRY.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*

SIR,—In your issue of the 9th Mr. Enfield asks what attitude this country should adopt if President Wilson were to invite all the belligerents to a kind of preliminary Peace Conference at Washington.

As Mr. George has during the last few days ousted Mr. Asquith on the ground that the latter was not sufficiently energetic as a War-Lord, it is hardly likely that the President would issue such an invitation to any administration of which he was the head unless he had strong reason to believe that the majority of the people were anxious for peace, and favored some such method of approaching it. I have friends who read the most bellicose papers with apparent approval, and talk about expending the last man and last shilling in crushing Germany (of which they are publicly confident), but in private conversation, freed from the fear of some listener stamping them with the Cain-brand "unpatriotic," they tell a very different story. I need not go into their reasons, which are many and varied. There seem to be two main lines of thought. To continue this unprecedented bloodshed without any attempt to see whether, now, after more than two years of hard fighting, some settlement may not be arrived at, seems to some a hideous crime. Others, as the war drags on, feel more and more convinced that the end will be a stalemate, owing to the exhaustion of both sides. Better, then, say they, to try to make some settlement now, before rather than after the loss of more—perhaps millions more—loved and valuable lives.

I am convinced that under a lot of war talk and outward enthusiasm there lies in this country a very real and keen longing for peace, and this not only among Radicals and Pacifists (of whom I know but very few), but among those who have hitherto voted consistently Conservative. Were there to be a referendum by ballot:—

1. War, with further expenditure of lives and treasure and the chances of a victory, which, ever promised, seems ever to recede further and further;

2. Such a Conference as Mr. Enfield suggests;

I think that the result would astonish our modern Jingo. I feel sure that this feeling exists—largely—and I think it is growing; but it is extremely shy, and how to coax it out into the open is a problem which I confess is beyond my powers.—Yours, &c.,

CONFER.

### A CONFERENCE OF BELLIGERENTS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Letters signed M. E. Burns and L. A. Enfield ask what will be, or should be, our attitude, if President Wilson proposes a Conference of Belligerents.

A Canadian soldier, when asked some months ago as to the feeling in camp, replied, "If Germany should show any disposition to come to terms, we hope that the Allies will not keep raising theirs, as they seem to be doing." And he



added significantly, "We did not come over from Canada to boycott German trade."—Yours, &c.,

D. B. McLAREN.

Minehead. December 10th, 1916.

#### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I shall be glad if you will insert this in your columns to prevent further repetition of an error which some of your correspondents have made.

The letter signed A. W. Claremont (with which I am entirely in accord) was written by my husband, and not by me.—Yours, &c.,

E. L. CLAREMONT.

7, West Heath Avenue, Hampstead, London, N.W.

December 9th, 1916.

#### "AN ARM-CHAIR PILGRIM."

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Dr. Horton dislikes my thanks to him because, as he truly says, I "hide my great personality under anonymity." Enforcing his urgent plea for "Liberalism" as against your malice or neglect, he told you, "the vast majority of men are morally weak and mentally limited . . . this mass of bad and imbecile creatures." Clearly my great personality must now be considered a constituent of this vast majority.

In his first letter Dr. Horton told you "it is due to them (the non-Episcopal churches) that in this country liberty and religion were not, as elsewhere, divorced." In his latest peroration he tells you "it (English Nonconformity) sees its own task in waiting and hastening and laboring to bring in that glorious future in which Liberty and religion will be agreed." It is pleasing that a champion of Liberalism should now lovingly contemplate English Nonconformity waiting and hastening and laboring for something to come, in the glorious future, which is here already as the work, in the glorious past, of the non-Episcopal churches.

I was, for forty years, a resident official of a large lunatic asylum, and I remain grateful for charming reminders of my past affectionate communion with original thinkers.—Yours, &c.,

OLD RADICAL.

Beverley.

#### OUR CONVALESCENT SOLDIERS

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The German authorities prepared, long, I am assured, before the war, a full scheme for the return into civil life of disabled men, indicating a complete course of training from the beginning of convalescence to the time of complete re-establishment. In this scheme were included particulars of sample cases; these particulars are illustrative of German thoroughness, but they are not without some unconscious humor; one man, for example, is to become a steward on a transatlantic liner. I feel sure it was only by an accidental omission that no one in the list is to be trained to be a waiter in an English restaurant.

We, on the other hand, have never faced the problem as a whole, and are indeed inclined to let the matter slide, on the ground that for the present, at any rate, the competent men will be quickly reabsorbed into industry. There is some force in this view, but it does not apply to the problem that arises earlier in the career of the wounded man—whilst he is yet in hospital and convalescent.

Here there is a somewhat different question to be faced: We have not only to consider the reconstruction of the man's physical force, but the strengthening of his character, affected both by his sufferings and by the weakening that is the inherent outcome of hospital life and the period of irresponsibility and indolence that goes with convalescence. The patient's nerve and energy have to be recreated, his manliness restored. Amusements and good-natured patronage will not do this. Often they are not wanted by the men themselves, sometimes, indeed, they are resented. "When you know the sort of thing it will be, you know that it is not worth while getting out of bed for," a patient once said to me when he was asked whether he

would go to an entertainment. It is a complete mistake to concentrate on amusements and social functions. There is much more important work to be done: we want to educate, and to do so not only in subjects that will be useful, but those that stretch intellect and imagination and give new mental interests to compensate for physical losses. Something has already been done on these lines, by arranging lectures and taking men to museums and picture galleries, with, I am told, success. It is necessary to develop on these lines, and every convalescent man should be taken in hand, and when his strength permits, persuaded—and perhaps, indeed, ordered—to attend some class or series of lectures for a certain number of hours every week in order to study some subject of general utility and of special intellectual value. For example, the man who has lost his right hand should learn to write with his left; those who are going into any form of business should learn book-keeping and accounts, and others type-writing and shorthand, some simple mechanics, or the reading of blue prints and other engineering plans. To these could be added such intellectual subjects as history and geography, music and singing. I believe such a programme could be easily carried out and greatly appreciated. Still, difficulties have to be faced. The provision of teachers appears at first sight almost insuperable. But in any hospital of any size men could be found who would undertake to teach some, at least, of the useful subjects, and this could be supplemented by voluntary help. The Workers' Educational Association would, I feel sure, be able to give substantial support. There is also the question of the provision of rooms. Sometimes the hospital will be able to arrange this, either within its own walls or in some neighboring building. The ideal course, however, and this, I understand, is about to be taken in London, is to obtain an empty house, as near to a large hospital or group of hospitals as possible, and make it a "Soldiers' Hostel"—a social and educational centre for convalescent men. Here the educational work could be supplemented by a reading room and, perhaps, a canteen for tea and simple light refreshments. The men might well have a voice in the management—a most important provision. In the hostel the wishes for the future and possibilities of every man could be discussed, the various alternatives put clearly before him, and his career, so far as possible, decided on. A man would be greatly helped to come to a sound decision if he had clearly before him the various prospects—the possibility of re-employment in his old trade, the Government schemes of training and industry, and the chance of securing employment in Lord Roberts's Memorial Workshops or other similar undertakings, where training and profitable employment are simultaneously provided.

Thus our teacher-centres would be made the starting-point of the man's new career.—Yours, &c.,

MONTAGUE FORDHAM.

Steeple, Petersfield.

#### "THE CREATED LEGEND."

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Anonymous reviewing has the presumed virtue of giving the reviewer greater scope for exercising his intellectual honesty. Its obvious disadvantage is that any journal publishing anonymous opinion is obliged—at least so it may be assumed—to exercise as reasonable consistency in its literary judgments as in its political ones.

In your issue of November 18th, under the heading of "A Doubtful Gift," your reviewer dwells at great length on certain aspects of Sologub's "Created Legend," of which I have just made an authorized translation. Now, I can have no quarrel with the reviewer for finding what he deems unsavory qualities in the novel. I would not even quarrel with his conclusions, with which I disagree, did not his strictures show so complete a reversal of opinion expressed in an article on Sologub in *THE NATION* of July 3rd, 1915. On that occasion your reviewer, far from looking with a benign eye on Mr. Stephen Graham's "careful selection" of Sologub's tales, resented his implication that Sologub was a sort of "Russian Hans Andersen," possessed of a "pleasant sense of humor," &c. But your critic did not stop there, and, in further criticizing the selection as "calculated to satisfy our English idealistic sense," he boldly and justly declared:—

"He (Mr. Graham) would be on firmer ground, we think, were he to face boldly the question of Sologub's morbidity . . . and to declare, candidly, that it is precisely because the English mind is so shuffling and evasive in its recognition of base and evil elements and instincts in human nature, that the Russian who offers us a 'veracious and sombre picture' is doubly valuable. What we thrust away from us with the conventional label affixed—'repellant,' 'morbid,' 'sordid,' 'evil'—is often spiritually more profound and aesthetically more beautiful than those phases and aspects of life and feeling which we acclaim as 'noble,' 'healthy,' 'good,' or 'happy.'"

That was what your critic said a little over a year ago, and he said a great deal more in the same vein. Incidentally, he seemed more favorably disposed toward my own selection, "The Old House." In any case, the statement just quoted from your first article describes admirably the ground on which Sologub stands—and I with him, as his translator—and if you think "The Created Legend" a "doubtful gift," it is well to remember that you yourself have asked for it. You must admit that your second article shows "some" reversal of opinion, to use an Americanism. And what will your watchful reader think of a judgment so Janus-faced?

I may add that Sologub, in granting me authorization, has desired particularly the translation of "The Created Legend" as a work likely to appeal to the English reader. That there was some perspicacity in his judgment is proved by the reviews which have so far appeared. The "Manchester Guardian," the "Times' Literary Supplement," the "Glasgow Herald," the "Scotsman," the "Birmingham Post," to name a few journals of repute, have expressed themselves favorably about the work, and none, except THE NATION, has questioned the value of the "gift."—Yours, &c.,

JOHN COURNOS.

44, Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.

[Each work of an author must surely be judged on its merits.—ED., THE NATION.]

#### WHAT GERMANS READ.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—No doubt Carlyle's "pro-Germanism" accounts very largely for his remarkable popularity in Germany at the present time, as shown by the publisher's list (1915) of "Die Blauer Bücher," the very tastefully got-up series (published at about 1s. 9d. unbound) which includes Rohrbach's work noticed by you in your issue of October 21st.

The list is instructive, as showing what the Germans—at least, the "solid" portion of them—read. This reading is by no means confined to "national" authors, even in war-time, as the following numbers will show: An Emerson selection, 55,000; a Maeterlinck selection, 80,000; a Ruskin selection, 100,000; two books by Lhozky, one on marriage, the other a very simply and beautifully written book for parents on the bringing up of their children, each 100,000; the aforesaid work of Rohrbach, 112,000; a book addressed "Kameradschaftlich," to young men on sexual problems, 135,000; a Carlyle selection, 175,000! This is the record.

Nothing would, perhaps, please the Germans more than to see us disown Carlyle, by destroying his statues, &c. In that case they could claim him entirely as their own.

I notice that while the first edition of Rohrbach's "Der Deutsche Gedanke in der Welt" (1912) is printed in Roman type, the second edition (1915), which is described as a reprint, but is really a thoroughly revised new edition, is printed in black letter! Can it be that German hatred extends to the type used by the Allies?—Yours, &c.,

E. TRECHMANN.

Hampstead.

#### A JOWETT CHESTNUT.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—A sense of humor is rare among controversialists; but, as a Balliol man who owes much to Jowett, may I suggest that he was probably a better judge of undergraduate human nature than your indignant correspondents? True or not, the chestnut quoted by Dr. Horton is certainly *ben trovato*. But it is obvious that the undergraduate in question was trying to pull the master's leg—an attempt pre-

destined to disaster—and was no more an Atheist than Dr. Horton himself.

Where real conviction was concerned, no one was a wiser or more considerate adviser than Jowett. A member of the college who had fallen under Evangelistic influences came to him: "Master, I have found the Lord." "I am glad to hear it," was the answer; "but, if I were you, I wouldn't tell people about it."

It is something new to find him spoken of, even by illiterate people, as an Obscurantist. He did more than any other man of his, or of our, generation to teach. Oxford, we think, and his pupils are sufficient evidence of the direction in which his teaching has made.—Yours, &c.,

ALFRED FAWKES.

Ashby St. Ledgers.

#### BOOK TITLES.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—May I make a small addition to "Penguin's" remarks on this subject?

After finishing a novel Wilkie Collins was sorely perplexed over the title. Finding no inspiration in London on a hot June day, he took train to the Kentish coast, and, flinging himself on the grass, began slowly to apostrophize the North Foreland lighthouse: "You're as tall—and as ugly as—my white woman. I have it! White woman; 'Woman in White.'—&c.,

FREDK. G. JACKSON.

Leeds.

P.S.—Andrew Lang said the business of a title was the same as that of a pretty woman—to attract.

### Poetry.

#### THE TEACHER.

You do not ask your dog to sup  
From a consecrated cup,  
Nor cast a string of pearls before  
The pig beside the stable-door;  
Dogs do not ask for hallowed dishes,  
Nor pigs for pearls have slightest wishes:  
And men, like beasts, are never given  
The things for which they have not striven:  
But no man ever went on quest  
And homeward turned again unblest;  
None ever asked of God a dole  
Without enrichment of his soul:  
When did you ever see a father  
Whose boy asked bread say, Take this rather,  
And hand his little son a stone?  
Or put him off with a bare bone  
When he passed in his plate for meat?  
Even a bad father could not cheat  
His child, and shall the All-wise and Good  
Deny your hungering spirits food?  
And when a man has learned to prize  
This inner kingdom's merchandize,  
He freely gives from his own store,  
And finds it still increase the more:  
Such is the law of interest  
In heavenly things made manifest.

So Jesus spoke, and then I thought, That's why  
God is so rich, He gives so plentifully:  
But if we ceased desiring, how soon we  
Could lock up God in bitter poverty!

EDITH ANNE STEWART.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "A History of Music." By Charles Villiers Stanford and Cecil Forsyth. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)
- "The Pan-German Plot Unmasked." By André Chéradame. Translated by Lady Frazer. (Murray. 2s. 6d. net.)
- "Germany." By W. T. Waugh. "The Nations' Histories." (Jack. 2s. 6d. net.)
- "Poland." By G. E. Slocombe. "The Nations' Histories." (Jack. 2s. 6d. net.)
- "The Moderns: Essays in Literary Criticism." By John Freeman. (Robert Scott. 6s. net.)
- "Anton Tchekhov and other Essays." By Leon Shestov. (Maunsel. 3s. 6d. net.)
- "Essays in Orthodoxy." By O. C. Quick. (Macmillan. 6s. net.)
- "The Diary of a French Private, 1914-1915." By Gaston Riou. (Allen & Unwin. 5s. net.)
- "Tales of Wonder." By Lord Dunsany. (Elkin Mathews. 5s. net.)
- "Capel Sion." By Caradoc Evans. (Melrose. 3s. 6d. net.)

"It is strange," Johnson once remarked to Burke, "that there is so little reading in the world." Yet in Johnson's day there were many confirmed readers, and the thing to wonder at is their resolution in allowing nothing to interfere with their pursuit. "History, poetry, and philosophy," Johnson's contemporary, John Wesley, has recorded, "I commonly read on horseback, having other employment at other times." This is certainly startling, but Wesley justifies his practice by equestrian as well as literary reasons:—

"I asked myself, How is it no horse stumbles when I am reading? No account can possibly be given but this: because I throw the reins on his back. I then set myself to observe; and I aver that in riding about an hundred thousand miles I scarce remember any horse (except two that would fall over heels anyway) to fall or to make a considerable stumble while I rode with a slack rein."

AMBULATORY readers are not so venturesome as those who read on horseback, though they too can be said to read dangerously. Shelley had many collisions with other pedestrians because his eyes were fastened upon his book. In one of Southey's letters there is a formidable list of books, ranging from "the Nibelungen in its original old German" to "a batch of volumes relating the events of the last ten years in Spain." "Some of them," he tells his correspondent, "I read after supper, some while taking my daily walk." Crabb Robinson was fond of reading as he walked. "I then walked in the rain to Clapton, reading by the way the 'Indicator'"; "I had an agreeable walk home, reading on my way Roper's 'Life of Sir T. More'"; "I walked then to Clapton, reading Lord Byron"—such statements as these are sprinkled through his "Diary." But Crabb Robinson read on every possible occasion. He speaks of having read three books of the "Odyssey" and several of Burke's speeches during one ride on horseback, and another favorite occupation of his was reading on the top of a stage-coach. Let anybody who wishes to rival this latter pastime try to read on top of a motor-omnibus. I believe he will regret the experiment. Lamb declared himself not much of a friend to out-of-doors reading, though he records his admiration at the sight of a Unitarian minister whose practice it was to study a volume of Lardner as he did his morning's walk. "I used to admire how he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts."

LAMB was one of the pioneers of a form of out-of-doors reading that is now common in London. The essay on "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading," as it appeared in the "London Magazine," contained a passage describing how Lamb perused a large octavo of Johnson and Stevens's "Shakespeare" outside the pit-door of Covent Garden Theatre, to the great annoyance of the crowd:—

"Still I read on—and, till the time came to pay my money, kept as unmoved as Saint Antony at his Holy Offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins mopping and making mouths at him. . . . The individual rabble (I recognized more than one of their ugly faces) had damned a slight piece of mine but a few nights before, and I was determined the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance."

The only other form of street-reading of which Lamb approved—at the doors of second-hand bookshops—has fallen out of favor, now that books are so cheap, and it is unlikely that any modern reader can rival Lamb's acquaintance who, "by daily fragments, got through two volumes of 'Clarissa,' when the stall-keeper quenched his laudable ambition by asking him whether he meant to purchase the work." It is not that second-hand bookshops have lost their attraction. If you notice a group of people standing outside any shop not devoted to the adornment of the female person, you can safely wager that it is a bookshop. But the purpose of the loiterers is to inspect (possibly to purchase) rather than "to filch a little learning."

READING in bed was, in my younger days, held up to reprobation, and dire tales were current of the fires produced by neglected candles. Electric light has changed all that, and I notice that in a book called "Pebbles on the Shore," just published in Messrs. Dent's "Wayfarer's Library," the practice is openly advocated. To this there is no objection, but I do not entirely agree with the writer in his choice of bedside companions. Boswell, Pepys, Borrow, and "The Compleat Angler" deserve their place, but Sainte-Beuve and the "Paston Letters" are more at home in the study, and I am inclined to think that "the dear little Boston doctor who talks so chirpingly over the Breakfast Table" ought to be allowed to rest in quiet oblivion side by side with the author of "The Gentle Life." I agree that Plato, Gibbon, and the learned brotherhood should not be allowed at the bedside, but why chase away the novelists? All books that come under the category of what Horace Walpole called "lounging books" are good bedside companions—"books that one takes up in the gout, low spirits, ennui, or when in waiting for company. Some novels, gay poetry, odd whimsical authors, as Rabelais, &c." Our author's concluding requirement will find general acceptance. "Your bedside friends should be dressed in soft leather and printed on thin paper. Then you can talk to them quite snugly. It is a great nuisance if you have to stick your arms out of bed and hold your hands rigid."

BISHOP HALL has more than one strong condemnation of reading at meals, but almost everybody reads at breakfast. In a more advanced civilization, breakfast will always be devoured in solitude, and thus the unseemly struggle to secure the morning newspaper will cease. To take up a book at a dinner-party while waiting for the meal to be served is unusual, though Dr. Johnson did so without hesitation:—

"Before dinner, Dr. Johnson seized upon Mr. Charles Sheridan's 'Account of the late Revolution in Sweden,' and seemed to read it ravenously, as if he devoured it, which was to all appearance his method of studying. 'He knows how to read better than anyone,' says Mrs. Knowles; 'he gets at the substance of a book directly; he tears out the heart of it.' He kept it wrapt up in the tablecloth in his lap during the time of dinner, from an avidity to have one entertainment in readiness when he should have finished another; resembling (if I may use so coarse a simile) a dog who holds a bone in his paws in reserve while he eats something else which has been thrown to him."

Yet, with all his eagerness to get back to his book, Johnson took a full share in the conversation at the table, which touched in turn upon cookery, the equality of the sexes, Christian evidence, the freedom of the will, the benefits of luxury, death, ghosts, and Quakerism.

READING with one eye is unusual among people who possess two. In Professor Phelps's "Browning and How to Know Him" it is stated that Browning used only one of his eyes for reading and writing:—

"Browning's eyes were peculiar, one having a long focus, the other very short. He had the unusual accomplishment (try it and prove) of closing either eye without 'squincing,' and without any apparent effort, though sometimes on the street in strong sunshine his face would be a bit distorted. He did all his reading and writing with one eye, closing the long one as he sat down at his desk. . . . When he left the house to go for a walk, he shut the short eye and opened the long one, with which he could see an immense distance."

There is something about this statement which leads one to hope that no evidence will be brought against its authenticity.

PENGUIN.



## Reviews.

## BROWNING.

"Robert Browning: How to Know Him." By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS. (Smith, Elder. 6s. net.)

"Robert Browning." By A. R. SKEMP, M.A., Ph.D. "The People's Books." (Jack. 6d. net.)

THERE is a certain fitness in the appearance of these two books about Browning at a time when all the devils have been loosed out of Hell. Browning was the great challenger of the multitude of devils. He did not achieve his optimism by ignoring Satan, but by defying him. His courage was not merely of the stomach, but of the daring imagination. There is no more detestable sign of literary humbug than the pretence that Browning was an optimist simply because he did not experience sorrow and indigestion as other people do. We do not mean to deny that he enjoyed good health. As Professor Phelps, of Yale, says:—

"He had a truly wonderful digestion: it was his firm belief that one should eat only what one really enjoyed, desire being the infallible sign that the food was healthful. 'My father was a man of *bonne fourchette*,' said Barrett Browning to me; 'he was not very fond of meat, but liked all kinds of Italian dishes, especially with rich sauces. He always ate freely of rich and delicate things. He would make a whole meal off mayonnaise.'"

Upon which the American professor comments with ingenuous humor of a kind rare in professors in this country:—

"It is pleasant to remember that Emerson, the other great optimist of the century, used to eat pie for breakfast."

The man who does not suffer from pie will hardly suffer from pessimism; but, as Professor Phelps insists, Browning faced greater terrors than pie at breakfast, and his philosophy did not flinch. There was no other English writer of the nineteenth century who to the same degree made all human experiences his own. His poems are not poems about little children who win good-conduct prizes. They are poems of the agonies of life, poems about tragic severance, poems about failure. They range through the virtues and the vices with the magnificent boldness of Dostoevsky's novels. The madman, the atheist, the adulterer, the traitor, the murderer, the beast, are portrayed in them side by side with the hero, the saint, and the perfect woman. There is every sort of rogue here half-way between good and evil, and every sort of half-hero who is either worse than his virtue or better than his sins. Nowhere else in English poetry outside the works of Shakespeare and Chaucer is there such a varied and humorous gallery of portraits. Landor's often quoted comparison of Browning with Chaucer is a piece of perfect and essential criticism:—

"Since Chaucer was alive and hale,  
No man hath walked along our roads with step  
So active, so enquiring eye, or tongue  
So varied in discourse."

For Browning was a portrait-painter by genius and a philosopher only by accident. He was a historian even more than a moralist. He was born with a passion for living in other people's experiences. So impartially and eagerly did he make himself a voice of the evil as well as the good in human nature that occasionally one has heard people speculating as to whether he can have led so reputable a life as the biographers make one believe. To speculate in this manner, however, is to blunder into forgetfulness of Browning's own answer, in "How it Strikes a Contemporary," to all such calumnies on poets.

Of all forms of human experience, it was love that Browning entered into most fully. It may seem an obvious thing to say about almost any poet, but Browning differed from other poets in being able to express, not only the love of his own heart, but the love of the hearts of all sorts of people. He dramatized every kind of love from the spiritual to the sensual. One might say of him that there never was another poet in whom there was so much of the obsession of love and so little of the obsession of sex. Love was for him the crisis and test of a man's life. The disreputable lover has his say in Browning's mono-

logues no less than Count Gismond. Porphyria's lover, mad and a murderer, lives in our imaginations as brightly as the idealistic lover of Cristina. The dramatic lyric and monologue in which Browning set forth the varieties of passionate experience was an art-form of immense possibilities, which it was a work of genius to discover. To say that Browning, the inventor of this amazingly fine form, was indifferent to form has always seemed to us the extreme of old-fashioned stupidity. At the same time, its very newness puzzles many readers, even to-day. Many people cannot read Browning without note or comment, because they are unable to throw themselves imaginatively into the "I" of each new poem. Our artistic sense is as yet so little developed that many people are appalled by the energy of imagination which is demanded of them before they are reborn, as it were, into the setting of his dramatic studies. Professor Phelps's book will be of especial service to such readers, because it will train them in the right method of approach to Browning's best work. It is a most admirable essay in popular literary interpretation. One is astonished by its insight even more than by its recurrent banality. There are sentences at which the fastidious will shrink, such as:—

"The commercial worth of 'Pauline' was exactly zero."

And:—

"Their (the Brownings') love-letters reveal a drama of noble passion that excels in beauty and intensity the universally popular examples of Heloise and Abelard, Aucassin and Nicolette, Paul and Virginia."

And, again, in the story of the circumstances that led to Browning's death:—

"In order to prove to his son that nothing was the matter with him, he ran rapidly up three flights of stairs, the son vainly trying to restrain him. Nothing is more characteristic of the youthful folly of aged folk than their impatient resentment of proffered hygienic advice."

Even the interpretations of the poems sometimes take one's breath away, as when, discussing "The Lost Mistress," Professor Phelps observes that the lover:—

"instead of thinking of his own misery . . . endeavors to make the awkward situation easier for the girl by small talk about the sparrows and the leaf-buds."

When one has marvelled one's fill at the professor's misphrasings and misunderstandings, however, one is compelled to admit that he has written what is probably the best popular introduction to Browning in existence.

Professor Skemp's little volume in the People's Books series is a readable summary of facts and judgments about Browning such as an average reader might find useful. Professor Phelps's larger book, on the other hand, is one of those rare books of popular criticism which will introduce an average reader to a world of new excitements. One of its chief virtues is that it is an anthology as well as a comment. It contains more than fifty complete poems of Browning quoted in the body of the book. And these include, not merely short poems like "Meeting at Night," but long poems, like "Andrea del Sarto," "Caliban on Sefebos," and "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came." This, we think, is the right kind of introduction to a great author. The author is allowed as far as possible to be his own interpreter. At the outset Professor Phelps quotes in full "Transcendentalism" and "How it Strikes a Contemporary" as Browning's confession of his aims as an artist. The first of them is Browning's most energetic assertion that the poet is no philosopher concerned with ideas rather than with things—with abstractions rather than with the individual lovelinesses of the world. His disciples have written a great many books that seem to reduce him from a poet to a philosopher, and we cannot protest too vehemently against this dulling of an imagination richer than a child's in adventures and in the passion for the detailed and the concrete. In "Transcendentalism" he bids a younger poet answer whether there is more help to be got from Jacob Boehme with his subtle meanings:—

"Or some stout Mage like him of Halberstadt,  
John, who made things Boehme wrote thoughts about."

With how magnificent an image he then justifies the poet of "things" as compared with the philosopher of "thoughts"! :—

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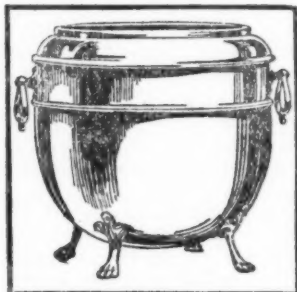
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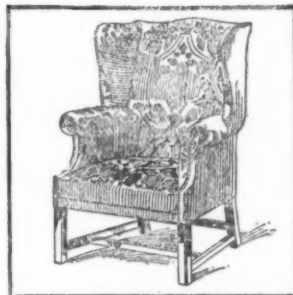
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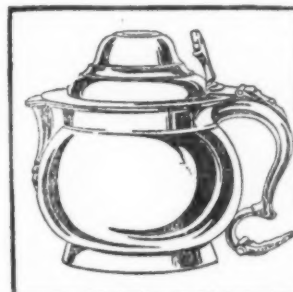
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"He with a 'look you!' vents a brace of rhymes,  
And in there breaks the sudden rose herself,  
Over us, under, round us every side,  
Nay, in and out the tables and the chairs  
And musty volumes, Boehme's book and all—  
Buries us with a glory, young once more,  
Pouring heaven into this poor house of life."

One of the things one constantly marvels at as one reads Browning is the splendid æstheticism with which he lights up prose words and pedestrian details with beauty.

The truth is, if we do not realize that he is a great singer and a great painter as well as a great humorist and realist, we shall have read him in vain. No doubt his phrases are often as grotesque as jagged teeth, as when the mourners are made to say in "A Grammarian's Funeral":—

"Look out if yonder be not day again,  
Rimming the rock-row!"

To read the second of these lines is as though one of the mourners had stubbed his foot against a sharp stone on the mountain-path. And yet, if Browning invented a harsh speech of his own for common use, he uttered it in all the varied rhythms of genius and passion. There may often be no music in the individual words, but there is always in the poems as a whole a deep undercurrent of music as from some hidden river. His poems have the movement of living things. They are lacking only in smooth and static loveliness. They are full of the hoof-beats of Pegasus. Here is no fastidious escape from life, but an exalted acceptance of it. Browning is one of the very few poets who, echoing the Creator, has declared that the world is good. His sense of the goodness of it even in foulness and in failure is written over half of his poems. "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came" is a fable of the triumph of life in a world rife with every abominable and hostile thing—a world, too, in which the hero is doomed to perish at devilish hands. Whenever one finds oneself doubting the immensity of Browning's genius, one has only to read "Childe Roland" again to restore one's faith. There never was a landscape so alive with horror as that amid which the knight travelled in quest of the Dark Tower. As detail is added to detail, it becomes horrible as suicide, a shrieking progress of all the torments, till one is wrought up into a very nightmare of apprehension and the Tower itself appears:—

"The round squat tower, blind as the fool's heart."

Was there ever such a pause and gathering of courage as in the verses that follow in which the last of the knights makes his resolve?—

"Not see? because of night perhaps?—why, day  
Came back again for that! before it left,  
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:  
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay  
Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay—  
'Now stab and end the creature—to the heft!'"

"Not hear? When noise was everywhere! it tolled  
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears,  
Of all the lost adventurers my peers—  
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,  
And such was fortunate, yet each of old  
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of years."

"There they stood, ranged along the hillside, met  
To view the last of me, a living frame  
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame  
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet  
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,  
And blew. 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.'"

There, if anywhere in literature, is the summit of tragic and triumphant music. There, it seems to us, is as profound and imaginative expression of the heroic spirit as is to be found in the English language.

To belittle Browning as an artist after such a poem is to blaspheme against art. To belittle him as an optimist is to play the fool with words. Browning was an optimist only in the sense that he believed in what Stevenson called "the ultimate decency of things," and that he believed in the capacity of the heroic spirit to face any test devised for it by inquisitors or devils. He was not defiant in a fine attitude like Byron. His defiance was rather a form of magnanimity. He is said, on Robert Buchanan's authority, to have thundered "No" when in his later years he was asked if he were a Christian. But his defiance was the defiance of a Christian, the dauntlessness of a knight of the

Holy Ghost. Perhaps it is that he was more Christian than the Christians. Like the Pope in "The Ring and the Book," he loathed the association of Christianity with respectability. Some readers are bewildered by his respectability in trivial things, like dress, into failing to see his hatred of respectability when accepted as a standard in spiritual things. He is more sympathetic towards the disreputable suicides in "Apparent Failure" than towards the vacillating and respectable lovers in "The Statue and the Bust." There was at least a hint of heroism in the last madness of the doomed men. Browning again and again protests, as Blake had done earlier, against the mean moral values of his age. Energy to him as to Blake meant endless delight, and especially those two great energies of the spirit—love and heroism. For, though his work is not a philosophic expression of moral ideas, it is an imaginative expression of moral ideas, as a result of which he is, above all, the poet of lovers and heroes. Imagination is a caged bird in these days; with Browning it was a soaring eagle. In some ways Mr. Conrad's is the most heroic imagination in contemporary literature. But he does not take this round globe of light and darkness into his purview as Browning did. The whole earth is to him shadowed with futility. Browning was too lyrical for that. He saw the earth through the eyes of a lover till the end. He saw death itself as no more than an interlude of pain, darkness, and cold before a lovers' meeting. It may be that it is all a rapturous illusion, and that, after we have laid him aside and slept a night's broken sleep, we sink back again naturally into the little careful hopes and infidelities of everyday. But it seems to us that here is a whole heroic literature to which the world would do well to turn back in these days of inexorable pain and horror on the road to the Dark Tower.

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his fellow-countrymen what they mean to do with the Parliament that is promised to them. What is going to be the special character of Irish civilization? In what forms of social life, by what arts of government and organization, is she going to express and manifest her own ideas and her own spirit in the world? What is Ireland going to look like as a nation? What problems is she going to help mankind to solve? However modest and careful her beginnings, she cannot be content merely to repeat and copy, merely to echo her neighbor. A. E. has perhaps in mind that harsh judgment of Mazzini's that Ireland had no claim to the title of nation because she had no special function in the world. "When we essay self-government in Ireland, our first ideas will, in all probability, be borrowed from the Mother of Parliaments, just as children before they grow to have a character of their own repeat the sentiments of their parents. After a time, if there is anything in the theory of Irish nationality, we will apply original principles as they are from time to time discovered to be fundamental in Irish character. A child in the same way makes discoveries about itself. The mood evoked by picture or poem reveals a love of beauty; the harsh treatment of an animal provokes an outburst of pity; some curiosity of nature draws forth the spirit of scientific inquiry, and so, as the incidents of life reveal the innate affinities of a child to itself, do the adventures of a nation gradually reveal to it its own character and the will which is in it." Hitherto Irishmen have discussed their rights to self-government with passion and an absorbing interest, but they have seldom speculated on their own character or the nature of the civilization they wished to create for themselves. This is the urgent and immediate task, and for this, A. E. argues, it is not so much men of action that are needed as scholars, thinkers, economists, "who will populate the desert depths of national consciousness with real thought and turn the void into a fullness." "We have to discover," he says in another passage, "what is fundamental in Irish character, the affections, leanings, tendencies toward one or more of the eternal principles which have governed and inspired all great human effort, all great civilizations from the dawn of history."

What is it, then, that is fundamentally Irish? To a certain kind of superior Englishman it is the shillelagh of faction fights, the noisy quarrels of religion, the brawling drink-shop, the squalor that makes the capital of Ireland such a hell for the poor, the slum that is darker than our own worst dens. They are a race, some say, who cannot govern themselves and will not let others govern them. But men who look a little deeper will note one important fact about this people. When our enlightened ancestors a century ago were boasting of the great age of improvement in agriculture, Sismondi asked a disturbing question, "What have you done with the peasants?" Ireland has begun her great agricultural regeneration, and the peasant has his foot on the soil. That fact is not an accident. It does not mean merely that the Industrial Revolution was all-powerful in one country and unimportant in the other. It represents the triumph, after years of persecution, absentee and grasping landlordism, land war with moonlighting on one side and evictions on the other, of something in the Irish character. And in trying to rebuild an Irish civilization that persistence is an element of moral strength of the utmost importance. For is it not the unconscious expression of some instinct belonging to the days of what Mr. Russell calls the Irishman's traditional communism, the age of his clan community, some quality in his soul that responds to the culture of the Gaelic poets and story-tellers "that still lingers like a fragrance about his mind"?

It is certain, Mr. Russell says, that democracy will prevail in Ireland. "The aristocratic classes with traditions of government, the manufacturing classes with economic experience, will alike be secondary in Ireland to the small farmers and the wage-earners in the towns." Irish civilization, then, when it is something made and developed by Irishmen, should be democratic. But the trouble is that a democratic civilization does not exist. Life was beautifully simple in the age of Bentham, when it was believed that the world might be turned into a democracy by the easy expedient of giving everybody a vote. We know to-day the difference between democracy as a society in which men are free and responsible, and that political democracy which leaves the mass of men in economic subjection, controlled in

respect of their daily lives by overpowering forces. In this sense the problem before Ireland is the problem that confronts us all. Mr. Russell draws a sombre picture of Irish rural society, with the gombeen man, the isolated farmers, the queer little village shops that multiply and waste human effort; but what sort of picture would he draw of an English village? Macaulay, with the optimism of his age, thought "The Deserted Village" began in England and ended in Ireland. It would take a remarkable brush to paint any Irish village in colors that would do justice to the servile atmosphere of a village in the south of England to-day. Now it is no more true of Ireland than it is of any other country that the mere grant of political self-government will create a society with the spiritual atmosphere of freedom, the instincts and attributes of a true community, the power of true co-operation. It would indeed be a wonderful lesson to the world if Ireland, the Cinderella, could teach mankind the art that has eluded each new civilization in its turn—the art of making men the masters and not the slaves of the industrial system of which our fathers boasted that it would civilize the world. But Mr. Russell is not without hope. He sees the promise of that new age in the co-operative movement, which has already changed the whole character of parts of Ireland. He puts his finger on the fatal weakness that has spoilt so much of the work of the co-operative movement here, with its limited and partial schemes. And for the towns he sees some hope in the spirit that ennobled the terrible days of the Dublin strike, when he learnt what loyalty and chivalry are buried in the Dublin slums. Is Parliament going to help and lead those instincts, or will it become a mere instrument for aggrandizing the interests of private capital and private trade, and putting all the promise of democracy beneath their power?

Mr. Russell takes some hints from guild socialism, and argues for a more direct control than the control of departments by Parliament. He gives a bitter picture of our Parliament at Westminster, serving the interests of the rich, and growing every day bolder and less shamefaced in distinguishing between rich and poor in respect of personal rights and dignity. His book should be studied by every Irishman, for it is full of wisdom and inspiration. But it should be studied also by every Englishman, for it will help him to learn something about Ireland and incidentally something about his own country as well. Can we pray for a better and nobler destiny for his appeal than that it should inspire both countries to forget their quarrels and their past and to look resolutely to a future in which each nation will be able to say of its own household that "none are forgotten or oppressed or left out of our brotherhood"?

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Maharajah accompanied the Logins to England, where his education was completed, purchased an estate in Suffolk, and settled down to the life of an English country gentleman. His guardian's most pressing duty was now to provide him with a wife. In 1850 a perfect candidate was found in the Princess Victoria Goumara, daughter of the ex-Rajah of Coorh, whose English sympathies had ensured her an English education, baptism, and the sponsorship of Queen Victoria:—

"The more I think upon the subject (wrote Sir Charles Phipps) the more it appears to me that these two young people are pointed out for each other. The only two Christians of high rank of their own countries, both having the advantage of early European influences, there seem to be many points of sympathy between them. They are both religious, both fond of music, both gentle in their natures. I know that the Queen thinks this would be the best arrangement for both their happiness, provided that they were to like each other."

But, alas for matchmakers, Duleep Singh had fallen in love with an English girl, and the Princess's musical and religious sympathies were urged upon him in vain. His suit, however, was unsuccessful, and, after other attempts had failed, the marriage question lapsed for a dozen years. In 1863, his duty, repeatedly urged on him by his mother as well as his guardians, became so imperative that he sent Lady Login the following memorandum:—

"November 16th, 1863.—I promise to pay Lady Login fifty pounds if I am not married by 1st of June, 1864, provided my health keeps good."

He kept his money. In the following spring his mother, the Maharanee Jinda Kour, died in England, and her son, conveying the body to India to be buried, furnished forth her funeral baked meats for his wedding-feast with a young lady met in a mission school on his way through Egypt. The wooing, conducted through an interpreter (for the young lady spoke nothing but Arabic) was necessarily brief; but although the bride was only fifteen, and remarkable for nothing but good temper and docility, the marriage turned out a complete success.

Of the Maharanee Jinda Kour, "the Messalina of the North," as Lord Hardinge called her, Lady Login gives us an amusing picture. With her Oriental clothing surmounted by an enormous bonnet, feathered mantle, and immense crinoline, the Maharanee could not move till two of her servants lifted her bodily on to a settee, "where she could sit comfortably cross-legged, her crinoline spreading round her like a cheese." The Maharanee greeted the wife of her son's guardian with great amiability, and, speaking of the excellent impression Sir John Login had made on her, added, in a burst of confidence, that "had she known what he was really like, she would never have arranged to have him poisoned as she had at one time contemplated."

Of England in the crinoline days, of John Bright, Jenny Lind (who, as the ideal of "Home, Sweet Home," it is distressing to meet under the Hunnish title of Madame Goldschmidt), and the wickedness of the Russians, Lady Login gives us many a gossip page; whilst the early chapters of the book, although they deal with no event or personage of importance, have a historical interest of their own. Lady Login lived till 1904, but the eighteenth century lingered well into the Scotland which she remembered as a child. Here the old feudal relations still existed between landlord and tenant—payment being made in kind and labor demanded by the landlord as a right—whilst the gentry steadily resisted the modern fashion of going sober to bed. Lady Login's father was married in 1804, and his youngest daughter never remembers him but as wearing ruffled shirt, knee breeches, buckled shoes, and long hair tied in a queue. Campbell of Kinloch was born and reared in Portugal, and endeavored to transform the eight little girls who had disappointed him by not being sons into Portuguese *senhoritas* by dancing lessons and compulsory earrings. His rare utterances in broken English were confined to the question, "You dance Chantrelle, Missie?" and when the inevitable negative came in reply, he would retort angrily, "No? You no dance Chantrelle? You no good!" and take no further notice of them. Their mother was a true Highland lady or "Bhantigearna" of the practical school, a notable spinster of flax, who spent long days in the "bothy" supervising the workers at their wheels. A charming picture is given of the

"long, low room, filled with the musical hum of fifteen or sixteen wheels all going at once, where, as the shades

of evening fell, the lads would gather bashfully in groups about the door, watching the women industriously ply their wheels in the gloaming. The room was lighted only by firelight, whose ruddy glow flickered and fell on the spinsters' figures and rockers. A favored few of the lads were permitted by the 'leddy' to enter and take a seat at further end of the room, where a lad might have a quiet crack with the lassie of his choice, screened by the shadows cast on floor, walls, and ceiling, by the movement of the spinsters' hands and feet working in concert—the one on the treadle, the other with a constant back and forward motion that twisted the thread twixt finger and thumb."

Lady Login's guardianship of the Princess Goumara brought her into close connection with the young lady's royal god-mother. Anecdotes about the Royal family are usually rather flat, but here is a pretty story of Queen Victoria, the ironic and terrible commentary on which neither she nor Lady Login mercifully lived to see:—

"The Queen, whom we had so lately parted from in calm dignity, was flying with the eagerness of a young girl, and so rapid was her movement, and so joyous her expression, it was plain that her suite had much difficulty in keeping pace with her speed. Catching sight of me in the distance, as she came up the long room, she suddenly waved aloft a telegram form that she was holding in her hand, and called out in triumphant tones, unheeding the shocked expression of her attendants at such unconventionality: 'Lady Login! Lady Login! I am a grandmother!'"

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"O, Covenant! O, Temple! O, frail pride  
Of God's high glory! Set your snowy feet  
On the Red Mountain, while the pinions beat  
Of proximate apocalypse. Uncried  
Halloos of havoc, prophecies denied  
Fulfillment till the dawn of wonder, fleet  
In songs precursive, down the glittering street  
Where dripped the blood from wounded brows and side."

The "hierophants," "chalices," "lazuli" and their fellows fall about us like the playing-cards about the head of Alice. The beard is white upon such lines as these:—

"The planets sing to see her, and to greet  
Her, nebulae unfold like nenuphars."

And:—

"Clammy with blood of crushed humanity."

is simply odious. But, in all justice to Plunkett, he did purify his style of these indiscretions in his later work, and wrote far more effectively on account of it. In speaking of the second half of his book, by the way, are those responsible for its publication aware that several of the poems are printed twice over? A more disgraceful carelessness we have never observed in all the arduous career of writing about other people's books.

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placed so beguilingly that they are wedded happily with their margins!—how can one help reading Mr. Leslie from first poem to last? In almost all modern poetry one has to climb over one's initial distaste for the setting of the poems before one can get at the poems themselves. And Mr. Leslie's muse has a charming delicacy of its own, sometimes a frail delicacy, sometimes an emaciated delicacy, and sometimes even a consumptive delicacy. His is a gentle but rather attenuated song, or rather prayer, for all his poems breathe a devout sigh for God. And the way he can set his verse floating into a quiet ether of sound is at times full of adroitness and sensibility. "The Two Mothers":—

"On the hill of weeping,  
Mother Mary spake unto Granuaile:  
'Little Mother, why so sad and pale?'  
'Half my sons are sleeping.'  
Unto Mother Mary said Granuaile,  
'And the rest are keeping  
Weary watch beneath a windless sail.'  
'Mother, hush your weeping,'  
Mary Mother said unto Granuaile;  
'They are in my keeping,  
Where their hearts and hands can never fail,  
And the rest are sleeping,  
But to rise again in freedom's gale,'  
Mary Mother said unto Granuaile."

Decorative melody, perhaps, but how captivating!

Mr. Stringer really frightens us out of our wits. He is one of your Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum-Bubble-and-Squeakers, and he writes an introduction in which he pitches all the formal poetastic brood who have had the cowardice to write in rhyme into limbo. "The paradoxical fact remains that even this most convention-ridden medium of emotional expression (i.e., rhyme) is a sort of warfare between the embattled soul of the artist seeking articulation and the immuring traditions with which time and the prosodian have surrounded him." Success in all nineteenth-century verse "has been achieved through ingeniously elaborating on an already established formula and through meticulously re-echoing what has already been said." The "verbal machinery" of the "mere mechanics" who have used rhyme in the past of our literature has left them "incapable of what may be called abandonment." "No necrophilic regard for its established conventions must blind the lover of beautiful verse" to the escape from the "limitations resulting from this incarceration" of Mr. Stringer. Yo ho! and a bottle of rum! Obviously, our dinosaur has not been clamped into the emasculating fetters of traditional prose. And he somewhat reassures us when he seeks articulation in verse:—

"I am through with regret,  
No more shall I kennel with pain.  
I have called to this whimpering soul,  
This soul that is sodden with tears,  
And sour with the reek of the years!  
And now we shall glory in light,  
Like a tatter of sail in the wind,  
Like a tangle of net on the sand,  
Like a hound stretched out in the heat,  
My soul shall lie in the sun,  
And be drowsy with peace,  
And not think of the past!"

More icarian than phaethontic, after all!

Mr. Squire's poems are also agreeably printed and decorated—with some happy initials, and a first-rate scroll title-page, brilliantly duplicated by the work of Messrs. Spare and Quick from a sixteenth-century French book ("Quadrins de la Bible"), printed at Lyons about 1550. Mr. Squire's verse has always been sincere, impressive, and of an eager, speculative cast. But in the past it has been liable to gross lapses in the quality of expression, to harsh discords—not dictated by the idea—and to a certain confusion and disorientation in the thought. And these curious descents from a sharp imaginative grasp of reality into a metrical journalese were, perhaps, due to a lack of self-reliance or of sustained poetic power, and still more probably of a keen mental sense of self-criticism. Mr. Squire has, we think, included one of his older poems in this selection, "Ode in a Restaurant." It is a poem of patches, sometimes sinking into the crudest phrase and versification:—

"How horrible this noise! this air how thick!  
It is disgusting. . . . I feel sick. . . .  
Moody I prod the table with a fork,  
My mind gapes, dizzies, ceases to work. . . ."

Sometimes into trivialities:—

"The cloth is linen, the floor is wood,  
My plate holds cheese, my tumbler toddy;  
I cannot get free of the body,  
And no man ever could."

And now and again into a genuine amplitude of language sprung from thought. The varying moods in the poem do not excuse this lack of equilibrium, because it is the business of poetry to contain its moods and not call in alien allies. But the other poems in the book are a far better-disciplined instrument of an artistic purpose. Their sureness of phrase corresponds with and is driven by a steadiness of poetic feeling. Roughness of speech and tenuity of thought there sometimes are, but, judged in the whole, and whether by one of his more recent achievements or not, they are fine, true, and good work, and kept under thorough artistic control:—

"A hundred thousand dead, with firm and noiseless tread,  
All shadowy-grey, yet solid, with faces grey and ghast,  
And by the house they went, and all their brows were bent  
Straight forward; and they passed, and passed, and passed,  
and passed.

But O, there came a place, and O, there came a face  
That clenched my heart to see it, and sudden turned my way—  
And in that face that turned I saw two eyes that burned,  
Never-forgotten eyes, and they had things to say.  
Like desolate stars they shone one moment and were gone,  
And I sank down, and put my arms across my head,  
And felt them moving past, nor looked to see the last,  
In steady, silent mood, our hundred thousand dead."

Which has a stately beauty all its own. We do not presume to tell Mr. Squire what to do; but, to our mind, the more intellectualized his verse, the better it is and will be.

## TWO VETERANS.

"The Leatherwood God." By W. D. HOWELLS. (Jenkins, 6s.)  
"The Rising Tide." By MARGARET DELAND. (Murray, 5s. net.)

Who would divine or credit off-hand that this admirably fresh and vigorous story of a primitive Ohio River settlement in the 'thirties was the work of a veteran of seventy-nine? Yet so it is, and the example of Mr. Howells, and to a lesser extent that of Mrs. Deland, who is twenty years his junior, remain as the high-water mark of the stream of American fiction, which sank steadily to banal commercialized levels at the turn of the century. The old "national" period in American literature, reaching from the 'seventies to the late 'nineties, was distinguished not only by breadth of outlook, but by a real critical sense of comparative values. Mr. Howells has always stood for the development of a genuine American culture, one which, while open to European influences, sought to propagate the best standards of indigenous taste. And every page of "The Leatherwood God" is instinct with the breadth and clarity of this ripened American spirit, one both tolerant and shrewd, large in its human horizon, yet keen in its swift dissection of fraud and frailty.

The story of Dylks, this common scoundrel and vulgar imposter who, playing on the religious fanaticism of the crowd of ignorant worshippers at Seneca Temple, wins over the majority, the Little Flock, to hail him as "the Lord thy God," is one of innumerable examples. Joseph Smith, with his revelation of the sacred books of the Mormon Bible, is, of course, the classic religious impostor. As Judge Braille, the old sceptic "who knowed more law and knowed more gospel than all the rest of Leatherwood put together," explains at the close, "life is hard in a new country, and anybody that promises salvation on easy terms has got a strong hold from the start. We want to be good, and we want to be safe, even if we are not good, and the first fellow that comes along and tells us to have faith in him and he'll make it all right, why we have faith in him, that's all." And the Philadelphian Dylks, who is a cheat and a sponger on women, and "knows where the fried chickens roost," with his audacity and his glib patter of texts, and his powers of improvisation, knows how to kindle the Sisters and the Brothers of Leatherwood Creek with faith in the New Jerusalem that he is going to bring down from Heaven. Mr. Howells, with the art of a master, has selected and set before us half-a-dozen types of this credulous Ohio backwoods community. The common,



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German literature has been widely distributed in India, accusing the British nation of grossly misgoverning the land. It is high time that the verdict of the people of India should be pronounced on the case, so that other nations may be made to realise what hideous fictions are sought to be passed off on them.

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To every donor of 5s. and upwards a copy of either "HOW THE TURK MAKES WAR" or "THE JEWISH PROBLEM AND THE WORLD WAR," both by Leon Levison, will be sent free of charge. These booklets are an enlightening exposure of what has happened and is happening in the East at the present time.

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ignorant folk are typified in Sally Reverdy, who buzzes about after Dylks's second preaching in the Temple, saying, "Oh, ain't it just great. I feel like as if I could fly. He's sent; you can tell that as plain as the nose on your face. How happy I do feel. I believe in my heart I got salvation this minute. Don't you feel the Spirit any? I did like the way the women folks was floppin' all round." Higher types are the rich farmer, Peter Hingston, the mild, kindly man who is always "looking for a sign," and Brother Enraghty, fierce in his outpourings, who assists at Dyeks's overthrowing of the devil in a hollow in the woods, and then greedily accepts the latter's revelation that he, Enraghty, is Paul the Apostle. So, like a prairie fire, the contagion of folly spreads, till we have the great scene in the Temple, where the Little Flock, working themselves up to a pitch of delirium, shriek their faith in their prophet and Messiah. And when Dylks proclaims: "I am God, and there is none else," they fall on their knees, the wisest and best foremost in the idolatry, and young girls and wives and mothers join in hailing Dylks as their Creator and Saviour, and beseech him to bless and keep them. The career of the self-made Messiah is, however, checked and finally broken by the opposing faction of the Hounds, "the godless outcasts, disturbers of camp meetings and baptisms, who attend in full force at Hingston Mill, where Dyeks has promised the elect, seeking a sign, that he will turn a bolt of cloth into seamless raiment by a touch of his hand. The impostor evades the issue by a subterfuge, and there is a riot in the mill, the mob tearing the bolt of cloth to shreds, and the faithful proclaiming that the miracle has, nevertheless, been accomplished. As Squire Braille puts it, "Dylks has plenty of audacity but very little courage. And perhaps he hadn't perfect faith in himself; he was a fool, but he wasn't a crazy fool." So when the Prophet, fearful, keeps out of the way, the enraged mob storm the house where he is concealing himself, and tear him first from his worshippers' arms, and then from his refuge in the kitchen chimney, and bring him before Judge Braille, who remarks dryly, "There don't seem to be any charge against the prisoner except claiming to be the Almighty. And there isn't any law in Ohio against a man being God." So Dylks, being acquitted, runs for his life from his enemies, and takes refuge in a swamp, whence he finally escapes, scared out of his wits by hunger and his physical sufferings. The finale is that the impostor is forced to clear out of the district, leading the Little Flock over the mountains to see the New Jerusalem; and after he has fallen into a river and been drowned *en route*, his besotted worshippers invent the legend of his ascent to Heaven in a chariot of fire, with two black horses and no driver! It is unnecessary to say that the story of the imposture, in all its stages, is presented by Mr. Howells with such perfect lucidity and such absolute psychological mastery of the features common to outbreaks of popular fanaticism, that "The Leatherstocking God" will take its place as a literary classic on the shelf devoted to the false prophets.

Less admirable as a work of ripened art, but extremely able in critical insight and general handling is Mrs. Deland's "The Rising Tide." From the opening chapter, with its family gossip between the two American matrons, Mrs. Childs, sweet and tolerant, and Mrs. Payton, fussily conventional, over the paralyzing, unladylike behavior of her daughter, Freddy, we know that the subject of "the modern girl" is in the grasp of a broadminded, sagacious writer. The English reader will be a little appalled by Freddy's cocksure contempt for the standards of the older generation, but her language, hard, flippant, and slangy, is really "the only distressing thing" about her. For under her crudity and terrible directness Freddy hides rare courage, great unselfishness, and a fund of energy for helping everybody weaker than herself. As a contrast with her broadminded, independent character, we have her friend, Laura Childs, the typically "nice," attractive girl, who, after marriage, becomes the common type of parasitic woman. The story turns on the unconscious struggle between the two friends to marry Howard Maitland, the square-jawed, honest-eyed young American businessman; and Mrs. Deland brings out very cleverly how, while Freddy's grit and character captivate his mind, all his male, primitive instincts turn to the sweet, soft, silly Laura, with her kittenish ways and cajoling manners. The best scene

in the book, one that will amuse old-fashioned people especially, is the one where Freddy, who thinks that "women shouldn't hide behind conventions," makes an offer of marriage to Howard. And he, scared to death, has to tell her that he "respects, admires, yes, loves her, only not—not just in the way she meant!" Her humiliation knocks more sense into the girl than all the advice and exhortations of her friends and relatives to be "ladylike" have ever done. And her lesson is finally learned when, after Freddy and Laura have to be bailed out for resisting the police at a factory girls' strike, Howard turns fiercely on his old chum and upbraids her violently for dragging poor delicate Laura, his beloved bride, "into the silly business." The novel, in fact, is full of crisply-written scenes, all edged with morals plain both to conventional-minded matrons and to girls who have brought their emancipation to the point of asking for "equality in this supreme business of loving." Mrs. Deland is a trifle blunt, perhaps, in driving her morals home, but her picture of American middle-class life is drawn in admirable perspective.

#### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"Italy in the War." By SIDNEY LOW. (Longmans. 6s. net.)

Mr. Low's book is the result of knowledge obtained by visits to the different sectors of the Italian front on the invitation of the Headquarters Staff. It contains descriptions of the formidable physical obstacles the Italians have had to surmount, and of the daring and ingenuity displayed by the men and their leaders throughout the campaign. It was not until the capture of Gorizia that the value of the Italian contribution to the resources of the Allies was generally recognized in this country, but Mr. Low has no difficulty in showing that, even in 1915, the task of the Italians was more arduous and their sacrifice heavier than most English people understood. In addition to a description of the military problems and achievements, Mr. Low has something to say about the spirit of Italy and her present political conditions. "Of all the belligerent nations I have seen," he writes, "Italy seems to me the most tranquil, contented, and serenely confident." The war has brought divergent orders and sects together, and even the bitter quarrel between Church and State is likely to be softened as one of its results. Mr. Low ends with a hope that Italian statesmanship will show itself to be moderate on the day of victory, and act cautiously and generously in the solution of the tangled problem which is presented by the re-settlement of South-Eastern Europe. It can never, he thinks, be solved on purely nationalistic lines any more than on dynastic or geographical lines. But, with the triumph of the Allies, Italy will be freed from external patronage, and will have full security to develop her economic resources and her national individuality.

\* \* \*

"The Soul of Dickens." By W. WALTER CROTCH. (Chapman & Hall. 6s. net.)

THIS is the third of Mr. Crotch's books about Dickens, and it has all the enthusiasm of its predecessors. Enthusiasm is, indeed, too much in evidence, for in his desire to eulogize Dickens, Mr. Crotch makes the mistake of doing something less than justice to other writers. We are told, for example, that "to be quite frank in the matter, Dickens did not influence modern English literature; he created it," and that "the whole of Victorian literature, down even to its veriest dregs and its shallowest imitations, owes its inception" to Dickens. And on the early years of the nineteenth century Mr. Crotch pronounces the judgments that "the novel had sunk to a position pitiable and grotesque," "the poem was charged with the vapors and aberrations of insanity," and "literature, in a word, was sick, or, at best, convalescent." This of a period that produced the writings of Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Crabbe, Byron, Shelley, and Jane Austen! In compensation for these extravagant judgments, Mr. Crotch's book shows a thorough knowledge of Dickens, and a real if unqualified appreciation of his services to English literature and English social life.

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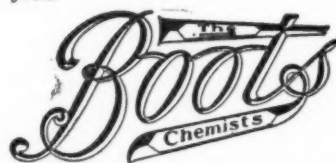
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"Mr. Poilu." By HERBERT WARD. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d. net.)

"POIL," in French military slang, Mr. Ward tells us, conveys about the same meaning as the English word "pluck," so that "Poilu," the honorable nickname of the French soldier, is a well-deserved title. Mr. Ward, who has been mentioned in despatches and decorated with the Croix de Guerre for his services in helping the French wounded, has had many opportunities of knowing the French soldier, and his book is a splendid tribute to French courage, gaiety of spirit, kindliness, and tenacity. There are, incidentally, some anecdotes that throw light on the German mind. In one village in Alsace, within range of the German guns, Mr. Ward was surprised to find that some excellent Kirsch was provided at dinner. He asked his host for an explanation, and was told that seven hundred bottles had been dug out of a flower-bed which was surmounted by a cross bearing an inscription in German-French: "Here lie the bodies of French soldiers." Mr. Ward's notes of his experiences are illustrated by a series of capital drawings. The volume makes an excellent gift-book, and a further inducement to purchasers is the fact that all profits from its sale will go to the service of the French wounded or to help the mourning families of the dead.

\* \* \*

"Child Lovers, and Other Poems. By WILLIAM H. DAVIES. (Fifield. 1s. net.)

The world, for all its desperate sickness, cannot yet be wrung dry of all its sweetness with such a genius as Mr. Davies still giving it his entrancing poetry. Some critics have discovered a falling-off in this last book of his, but, for the life of us, we cannot see it. We recently reviewed a selection of his complete work. But one point we may make. So much has been made of the sheer dewiness of Mr. Davies's work, that the really masculine quality of his imagination has not received its due:—

"And (thinking) that my seed is drops of ink,  
Which, were my song as great as I,  
Would sweeten man till he was dust,  
And make the world one Araby;  
Thinking how my hot passions make  
Strong floods of shallows that are cold—  
Oh, how I burn to make my dreams  
Lighten and thunder through the world!"

The dew seems to have been caught up by the sun!

\* \* \*

"Told in the Huts: The Y.M.C.A. Gift Book." With an Introduction by A. K. YAPP. (Jarrold. 3s. 6d. net.)

NEARLY every man who comes back from the war, wounded or on leave, has a good word to say for the huts which the Young Men's Christian Association provide for the comfort and recreation of the soldiers. The book before us, which is largely made up of contributions by soldiers and war workers, is worthy of the cause for which it is published, and it is hardly necessary to do more by way of recommendation than mention the fact of its existence. As some guarantee, however, that purchasers receive value for their money, we may mention that its contributors include "George A. Birmingham," Sir Robert Baden-Powell, Mr. Pett Ridge, and "Ian Hay," and that it has been illustrated by the late Mr. Cyrus Cuneo.

\* \* \*

"War Phases According to Maria." By Mrs. JOHN LANE. (Lane. 2s. 6d. net.)

WE have in an earlier volume seen some of the phases of the war through Maria's eyes. Her later comments are no less entertaining. Her views on margarine, submarines, and "the new equality" have all the interest of unexpectedness. In fact, Maria is a personage. She can irritate to the border of madness, but even when she is most irritating she does not fail to amuse. This implies no little skill on the part of Maria's creator. In the present volume Maria finds a witty illustrator in Mr. A. H. Fish.

## The Week in the City.

THE City was unaware of the German peace proposals when the Stock Exchange closed on Tuesday. They caused, of course, a prodigious sensation, and gave much satisfaction; for most City men are eager for peace as soon as a secure and honorable settlement can be obtained. After many days of depression, the German offer imparted rather more steadiness to the Consol Market, when members met on Wednesday. But in other directions depression prevailed, mainly as a result of monetary conditions in New York, which are causing some anxiety, and have occasioned considerable declines in American railway and industrial stocks. Rubber has fallen again to just over 3s. per lb., on receipt of important cargoes from Malaya. At home depression has passed from the railway market to shipping and mining shares, from causes into which one need not enter. November's trade returns have not been pleasing to bankers, who realize that the greatly increased adverse balance must enhance the strain on our exchanges. Another disturbing feature is the falling-off of Exchequer Bond issues and the increasing purchase of Treasury Bills.

### THE FALL IN SHIPPING SHARES.

Ever since the Stock Exchange reopened in January, 1915, shipping shares have been more or less active, and values have steadily appreciated. The speculative element has not been absent, for, with so many amalgamations taking place, and rumors of further combinations, buyers have often been inclined to take more shares than they would in the ordinary way. When it was announced a fortnight ago that the Government was to take over the South Wales Coalfield the shipping market became unsettled, and selling began; and with the reports that the new Premier intends the British mercantile marine to be controlled by Government, there was almost a collapse in prices, as will be seen from the following table:—

	Highest in 1914.	Highest in 1916	Price Dec. 12, 1916.
Anchor Line (Pref.)	102	10 3-32	94
Cian Line	114	324	32
Cunard	34/9	5 1-16	4
Furness Withy	14	3	24
Gen. Steam Nav.	64	134	13
Houlder Line (Pref.)	34	4 3-16	14
Khedivial Mail	11/6	37/-	31/-
King Line	9 9-16	20	19
Mercantile Steamship	64	184	174
P. and O. (Def.)	325	347	3274
Royal Mail	1154	1344	1124

These figures show clearly how inflated values had become owing to the great prosperity of the shipping industry; but there has been a substantial fall, and there is little prospect of any immediate recovery. It will of necessity be some time before the conditions under which the Government will assume control become known.

### CAMP BIRD AND SANTA GERTRUDIS.

The report of Camp Bird, Ltd., the American Mining Co., for the year ended June 30th last shows the revenue from operations fell from £196,100 to £163,200, while the net profits from this source amounted to £94,900, as against £112,500 a year ago. After adding the dividend on Santa Gertrudis shares, amounting to £46,500, or £4,000 less, and deducting administration expenses and sundry payments, there is a net balance of £141,700, as compared with £156,000 a year ago. A special reserve is credited with £3,000, and after payment of preference dividend, the balance carried forward is increased from £6,600 to £85,000, no distribution being made to ordinary shareholders. A year ago 1s. per share was paid. The Santa Gertrudis Company, on the other hand, increased its profits from £44,700 to £70,100. Of this £23,000 is put to income-tax reserve, and £5,000, as against £10,000 last time, is transferred to special reserve. After paying a dividend of 1s. per share, the same as a year ago, the balance carried forward is reduced by £33,400, to £22,000.

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